



SUNSET VIEWS

IN THREE PARTS.

BY

BISHOP O. P. FITZGERALD.

"I am a part of all that I have met."—TENNYSON

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TO BE READ OR SKIPPED.

IN most of the things that they do, men act from mixed motives. Whether the making of this book shall prove an exception to this general rule, the reader will judge. Of this I am sure: The chief motive is to magnify the mercy of God. And the thought that these pages may make a channel for his grace to flow into other souls warms my heart as I pen these words.

Several kindly voices had said to me: "Tell the story of the men and times you have seen, in your own way." The thought took hold of my mind, and almost grew into a purpose. I have not the vanity or the idiocy to think that my life is worth writing. I would not do it if I could. No man who tells the story of his own life ever tells all. There are reserves of self-respect and privacy that are sacred to all save the hopelessly vulgar and vile. I have no grudges to settle. I do not wish to leave a line written by this hand that will give pain to any human heart. Posthumous malice is the meanest of all: it combines both malignity and cowardice. The Christian statute of limitations applies to all grudges in noble souls, when time has come to cool the heat of passion or to clarify the judgment. Death cancels all debts of reprisal.

A week ago I decided, if so God willed, that I would print these chapters in their present form. This final decision was made just as the setting sun flushed with glory the hills that encircle Nashville, the beloved city whose people are like kinsfolk to me, from whose homes so many elect souls dear to me have already gone up to the city that hath foundations whose maker and builder is God.

CONFIDENTIAL.

THE writing of my proposed book, to be entitled “The Men and the Times I Have Seen,” was abandoned for good reasons shortly after it was announced. Let friendly readers be duly thankful. The other sort—well, they will acquiesce.

SUB-PREFACE.

To burn or to print these pages—that was the question with me when, thinking the time of my departure was at hand, I was setting my affairs in order. Much stuff, such as it was, was consumed, but these pages were spared for reasons that may be guessed at by the discerning. My old friends will be indulgent. If any of them shall conclude that I have ventured once too often as a bookmaker, so be it. I have not been the first, nor will I be the last, to err in this way.

THE AUTHOR.

FOREWORD.

THAT vision of the sunsetting came to me in a dream of the night. It was a vision that excelled all that mine eye had seen in all my waking hours. I stood on the top of a peak, high and lifted up above ten thousand lesser ones grouped below and all around it, all bright with the glory of a cloudless sunset. The silence was holy. The note of a song bird, the chirp of an insect, or the flutter of a butterfly's wing would have jarred on my ear then and there. I had sunk to sleep after a day of weakness and pain — thinking, thinking, thinking, and praying: thinking that I might next awake in the spirit-world or linger on here only to suffer, and praying that grace might be given me to go or to wait, as it pleased God. The vision came when it was needed by the soul that clung to God and was sweetly tuned by him for its touch. I awoke with a blessedness in my spirit that cannot be put into words. A still, small voice whispered to my inner ear: "At evening time it shall be light." And it is.

The title of this book was born of that vision. The blessing of it abides.

O. P. F

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PART I.

BACKWARD GLANCES.

(xlii)

BLOOD WILL TELL, BUT NOT ALL.

BLOOD WILL TELL, BUT NOT ALL

BLOOD will tell. From Adam and Eve down to this day, this has been an accepted truism. From Abraham to the latest born inheritors of titles or dollars, men have loved to air or invent their pedigrees. Our family was like other families in this respect. The lower the family fortunes sunk—and they sank to a point that was very low at one time—the more they had to say as to what they had been in earlier days. Perspective smoothes genealogies as well as landscapes. Distance lends enchantment to the view where the imagination gilds the summits of vision. It is well that this is so. There is enough that is petty and pitiful in our everyday life to give us cause for thankfulness for the glamour that is on the past, as well as for the glory that through faith and hope gild the future.

My parents—Richard Fitzgerald and Martha Hooper—were both Virginians, and belonged, at least in a chronological sense, to the first families. I could wish that I knew the verity of the tradition that this Virginia branch of the Fitzgeralds was akin to Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who was a martyr for the cause of freedom for Ireland. There is no nobler name in Irish history. This is saying much. The noblest Irishmen are among the noblest of earth's true nobility, whether titled or untitled. A mean Irishman is the meanest of men. Irishmen are extremists, patriots of the first quality or traitors of blackest dye; martyrs glad to die for truth or ready to sell it to the highest bidder. God bless

old Ireland! God bless her children wherever they may wander to the latest generation!

The families of the Hoopers, the Powells, the Goodes, the Grants were branches of the family tree. My maternal grandmother was a marvel of energy in business and fervor in religion. She had every soul on the plantation aroused at day-break and ready for work. Her gift in prayer was extraordinary. At a camp meeting her prayers seemed to move heaven and earth. She ran a distillery famous for the quality of its whisky. There is no question of her sincerity as a Christian. At that time members of the various branches of the Church of Christ took their drams as a matter of course, ran distilleries, and "treated" in election campaigns. The stillhouse and "meetinghouse" were owned and managed by the same persons as a matter of course. The Methodists were among the first to make war against whisky in that region, as elsewhere in this land. The fires of that old stillhouse have long since ceased to burn, the very site of it is lost; but the songs of the Methodists are still heard among those Dan River hills. The dear old mother in Israel now sees more clearly what few could see in her day—the sin and curse of strong drink—and when we join in the new song in heaven, she will be there too. The ideas and standards have changed, and changed for the better, during the intervening decades. God is God, and this world is his world.

An illustration of the reign of God's grace in the world may come in just here. Among the negroes on the farm was "Uncle Lunnon," who in an earlier and darker time came over from Africa as a compulsory immigrant in a British slave ship. He was almost as strong as a gorilla, and very profane and hot-tempered. But he was honest and truthful.

He lived to be one hundred and twenty years old—the oldest man of any color that I ever saw. The most remarkable fact concerning Uncle Lunnon was his conversion in the last year of his life. By the grace of God he was brought under deep conviction by this thought which came into his mind: “I have been faithful to my earthly mars-ter, but I’ve been a mean nigger toward my heavenly Marster. I’ve lived longer than any nigger I ever heard of; in my prime I was stronger than any man, black or white, I ever met. But I’ve been a cussin’ and not a prayin’ man all my life. I am a mean nigger.” So, to use his own language, Uncle Lunnon put the case to himself. In genuine penitence he bowed before God, and helped by the counsel and prayers of my uncle, Bannister Fitzgerald, Uncle Lunnon was led to lay hold of the hope set before sinners in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us. If any channel is left open in a human soul, the grace of God will flow in.

Heredity is a potent factor in every human life. Free agency is also a fact. Heredity may give a trend upward or downward, but free agency determines the movement. Not fatality, but free agency, fixes destiny. The rule of judgment is equitable. The Judge is infallible. Where little is given, little is required; and where much is given, much is required. Lack of effort is the only ground of condemnation of any human soul. The slothful servant, not the one less gifted, is the one who went into outer darkness—not only by the sentence of the Judge, but by the drift of his own indolence, or by the perversity of his own will. No soul ever perished in any other way.

AN EARLY START.

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WHEN two days old, I came into the Church of Christ in a sense good and true, and have been in it in some sense until now. Membership with me means membership forever. The Church militant merges into the Church triumphant. The Church is the one organization on earth in which membership never lapses. The reader understands my meaning when I say that I came into the Church when two days old—that is to say, I was then dedicated to God in baptism. Dr Abram Penn, of the Virginia Conference, was the administrator. The second member of my “given” or Christian name is Penn, and was given for that man of God, whose memory is blessed. After pouring or sprinkling upon my head the crystal drops that symbolize the promised grace that cleanses the soul through the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, he knelt at the bedside and prayed that the man-child might live before the Lord; that he might be a disciple of Jesus; that he might be a Methodist preacher. “*I felt* the answer,” said my mother to me with wet eyes in a low voice that I seem to hear now as I write the words. She felt the answer—and so have I all my life. Christians used to talk that way in those days concerning prayer. They believed that the prayer of faith touches God, and that God can and does touch the petitioner and the subject of the prayer at the same moment. The old Book seems to put it the same way. Many Christians reach this level at times in their lives. It is a high

plane: up there the air is very pure and the light is clear-shining. My mother had that sort of faith. According to her faith it was done unto her: she lived to know that the boy-child she gave to God in the baptismal covenant was a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. My dear, Christian mother! She was said to be wonderfully beautiful in her youth. To me she was always beautiful. She was a woman of many sorrows. The last time I saw her the marks of age and pain and grief were on her face. I shall see her again, clothed in beauty greater than that of her bridal morning, up yonder in that land where the weary rest. She was a sweet singer, and her songs were mostly in the minor key. She had sorrows of her own, and was touched by all the sorrow of the circles in which she moved, from the highest to the lowest. She ministered to all, and was loved by all. These many years she has been within the vail. I shall know her when we meet, and the rest of the city of God will be completer when once more I feel the clasp of her arms.

Yes, I came into the Church when two days old, and the tie was never wholly broken. The relation of the baptized children of the Church to the Church and its Head is very sacred to every parent who knows and feels what is meant by the baptism of children. Many show that they neither know nor feel its solemn and blessed significance. There will be an awakening and a reform in the brighter day that is coming in Christendom. Then will be understood the fullness and sweetness of the meaning of the Master's words: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." What do the words mean? We may be sure that they do not mean

that our children are farther from God and lower in privilege in the New Testament Church than under the old dispensation. We may be sure that they do not mean that our children must of necessity go into sin and be stained and maimed and stunted in their spiritual development by it. We may be sure that they do not mean that they are to be turned loose in the world and branded by the devil, afterwards to be lassoed and tamed if possible by special effort. No, no! The Master's words must mean at least this much: that the baptized children of the Church belong to him; they are initially inducted into his kingdom; they have the promise of prevenient grace and guidance up to the line of moral accountability. Then what? Just this: they may and ought to tide right over by faith into the conscious salvation of the gospel. Faith is choice—the choice of the parent at first, the choice of the child when choice for it is possible. My mother felt the answer to her prayer of faith at my baptism: I feel it now.

The millennium cannot come until the Church shall have assumed its proper relation to the children of the Church. If it were to come, it could not stay with a Church that allows a wall of ice to shut off her children from her communion. Question: May not the lapse into sin of so many children in the families of ministers of the gospel and other good people be owing to their error at this point? The religious natures of their children bud into initial life normally at an early age, and are killed by the frosts of neglect and delay. They may not have a second budding time: if they do, will not the growth be a stunted growth? The promise is to you and your children in the present tense for all. Let him and her that readeth understand.

MY FIRST SCHOOLING.

MY FIRST SCHOOLING.

THE image of my first school-teacher rises before me as I begin this chapter—that of a sweet-faced, sweet-voiced, holy woman, who opened the daily sessions with a prayer that made us feel that she was talking with God and that he was there. The discipline of her school was strict, but it was the strictness of a constraining and pervading personal influence rather than a code of rules or fear of punishment. A boy about my own age one day was detected in a falsehood, and was told to stand in a corner and think of his sin against God. All the corporal punishment I ever felt or witnessed in all my life never impressed me with the guilt and shame of falsehood as did that object lesson. She somehow made us feel that all sin was sacrilegious as well as mean. We all loved her. The image of Rebecca Field—that was her name—keeps its place in my heart undimmed. She was what coarse people call an old maid—one of those sweet-souled and finely-tuned women who, making no homes of their own, bless every home they touch; one of those Christlike spirits that, with a self-abnegation incomprehensible to lower natures, live for others, sweetening this dull, sordid world and ripening for that other world beyond where, with that other Mary whom Jesus loved and a blessed company of such elect souls, they will find their reward and fit companionship. That long sentence grew upon me, but its length will be excused when the reader is told that this holy woman, my first teacher, gave me a love for all such that I can never lose.

My next teacher was a man—a man to be remembered. He was a good man, but severe, with notions of school government and discipline quite in contrast with those held by my first teacher. He did not spoil his pupils by sparing the rod. He whipped them with apparent enjoyment and extraordinary energy and frequency. Those gum and hickory switches, four or five in number, were placed above his desk, not for ornament, but for use. I heard him say more than once that I was his favorite scholar: he exhibited his favoritism by whipping me more than the others. Under the circumstances I was not very proud of the distinction. Fear and force ruled his school. The boys hated and feared him, and loved to annoy him as much as he seemed to enjoy flogging them. It was a hard time for both teacher and pupils. Once during the term we “turned him out” for a holiday, and it was done by main force: a big boy asked for a holiday, and was refused; and then the irate pedagogue was thrown to the floor and held down until he agreed to the demand. We went away triumphant and rejoicing. But when we came back after the holiday was over, he “got even” with us, and more. Those gum and hickory switches made up for lost time. It is needless to say that to me the memory of the teacher that prayed and ruled by love is sweeter than that of the one who whipped and ruled by fear.

My third teacher was a quaint old Irish-American, a fine scholar, a gentleman of the old school, whose passion was mathematics and whose special abhorrence was faulty syntax. He was not averse to the use of the rod in dealing with boys, but he never gave a blow to a girl: the chivalry of his race on its upper side was in his blood and breeding. An Irishman’s best, let me again say, is as

good as the best to be found anywhere on earth. He would show a partiality toward the girls that made the boys angry sometimes. At this distance this trait lends a grace to his memory. His weakness leaned in the direction of a chivalrous sentiment that has made half of the poetry of the world and a large part of its blessedness. It is a pleasant fact to record that my old Irish-American schoolmaster became a Christian man. He was converted at a Methodist camp meeting, and was quaintly demonstrative on the occasion. On the camp ground he had an enemy, a man named Kemp. Glowing with his first love as a Christian he sought his enemy, and finding him in the midst of a group of men, he grasped his hand, saying impulsively: "Kemp, give me your hand—I feel humble enough to shake hands with a dog!" The old man kept the faith unto the end of his life.

My next and last teacher was a small man, quick of motion and speech, with a big head covered with black bushy hair, spotless in his apparel, jealous of his dignity, with a passion for work and genuine good will toward all his pupils. He was what many would call a fussy man, ready to take sides in all personal quarrels, a hot partisan in politics, and perpetually entangled in mild love scrapes. But he had the pedagogical gift beyond question, and was at bottom a true man. There was a streak of romance in his life, but the pathos of grief and death crowd it out of this record.

I had other schooling all along, of course—the schooling of my environment, which was mixed and peculiar. Our home was a frequent stopping place for the Methodist preachers. When farthest from religion in his daily life, my father never lost his respect and regard for the Methodist Church and its ministry. Her Church life was for my

mother the golden thread that ran through all the tangled web of her life. So in my boyhood I heard (as a boy hears) the sermons of such pulpit giants as Peter Doub, James Reid, and William Anderson; the tremendous exhortations of Father Dye; the seraphic songs of Jehu Hank. I was saturated with the spirit of that time of mighty revivals, polemical controversy, and sharp hand-to-hand fighting with the world, the flesh, and the devil. And the fighting was indeed sharp. The whisky distillery, the cross-road doggery, the cockfight, the horse race, the card table, were all around. I saw and heard much that I would be glad to forget forever. It was largely a duel between the Methodist Church and the whisky devil during this period. When in 1866 my father, then an old man, told me that he went alone once every day to pray in the little Methodist chapel in sight of his home, and that he had found peace with God, and was waiting for the call to go up to meet my mother, I thanked God for the Methodist Church that has made the desert places of America blossom and its wildernesses to rejoice.

The life and death of my brother William, two years older than myself, was a graciously educative influence of my boyhood. He was frail in his physical constitution from the start, and there was something about him that seemed to indicate that he was destined for another and higher sphere than earth. He was never known to utter an evil word, or to show a wrong temper, or to strike an angry blow. There was a spiritual beauty about him that awed and attracted both the old and the young. He died in his teens, lying in our mother's arms, his face shining rapturously as he said with upward look, "Lift me higher!" That death and the life that went before it were part of my schooling.

A SAD NIGHT RIDE.

A SAD NIGHT RIDE.

I WAS a sad-hearted boy that winter day when I left home to go out into the wide world alone. My mother's hot tears fell on my face as she gave me a parting kiss. I feel it all as I write these lines to-day, more than fifty years afterwards. I was under fourteen years old. The family fortunes had sunk to a point where it became imperative that I should become self-supporting. From that day to this I have fought this battle. The record of the struggle would be a record of my gropings in the dark and sinnings in the light on the one side, and of the patience and mercy of my God on the other. (That last sentence might be taken as an epitome of my whole life.) Blessed be His name!

My destination was Lynchburg, Virginia. It was twelve miles to Danville, where ended the first stage of my journey. I felt like one in a dream as the four-horse stage wheeled me along. The winter sky looked cold, and there was a heaviness about my heart and a lump in my throat. I had no appetite for the hot supper set before me at Williams's Tavern. When a boy in his early teens loses his appetite, there is something serious in the case. At two o'clock in the morning I was roused and told that the stagecoach was waiting for me. That ride! It seemed a long, long time from two o'clock to daybreak. The weather was very cold, the very stars glittering coldly in the sky, the horses' hoofs making lively time on the frozen roadbed. The jolting of the stagecoach and the sadness of my heart kept me wide awake dur-

ing the long hours. The sense of loneliness was then first felt, not for the last time. There are souls that feel it all their lives—orphaned at the the start, isolated all along. To such heaven will be sweeter, if possible, than to all others—the heaven where the family of God shall meet and mingle in fellowship unrestrained, with love unmixed and unending. Blessed are the homesick who shall reach that home! I was too heartsick to realize how cold it was. When at sunrise we drove up to the tavern at Pittsylvania Courthouse, I was so nearly frozen that I had to be lifted out of the stagecoach, taken into the house, and set by the big log fire to thaw. The landlady gave me a kindly look, and spoke kindly words that touched my boy-heart. But I thought of the home I had left on the other side of Dan River, and again there was a lump in my throat. It all comes back—that long cold night ride, the all-day ride that followed, and the heartache that never left me for a moment. Over the hills of Pittsylvania and Campbell counties, crossing Staunton River, which then looked big to my boyish eyes, the wintry wind whistling through the forest trees, the smoke curling upward from mansions or cabins in the clearings, the Blue Ridge outlined northward in the sky that looked so far away and so cold—it all comes back with a rush upon my memory, my first day alone in the world. There was a sort of semi-orphanage in my consciousness that day that has given me sympathy for orphanage all my life. And I do not wonder that the Book that tells us what is in God's heart toward his creatures says so much about the children that are motherless and homeless. The heavenly Father may not be seen by the natural eye in the order of the natural world, but the throb of his heart is felt in the

Word that tells us what he is and how he feels. The heavenly Father!—that is what he calls himself. Our Father, who art in heaven, thy kingdom come in our hearts, in our lives, in our world, is the prayer that rises from my soul in penning the closing words of this short chapter! *Amen.*

HOW METHODISM KEPT ITS HOLD.

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IT may be worth while for me to pause in this straggling narration, and tell how it was that Methodism held its grasp upon me. The solution seems to be very simple: Methodism went everywhere that I went. There was always within my hearing a Methodist voice that would expose the sophistries of infidelity, and I was never beyond the sweep of a revival wave that bore me back toward my mother's Church. No matter how high might rise the tides of worldliness, passion, or unbelief, the tides of spiritual life in Methodism rose higher still. The Methodist idea then seemed to be that the mission of the Church was to save sinners in a sense more explicit than is now understood by many. The great revival out of which Methodism was born was still sweeping over the land. Through Methodism and other evangelical agencies God was commanding all men everywhere to repent. The kingdom of heaven was at hand in a sense that was special. To save sinners, not to build up the Church, was the Methodistic idea. The continent shook beneath its tread. This is the gospel that was needed. The Church was built up, of course, wherever souls were born of God into new life under her ministry. There never was seen anywhere else such rapid growth in Church membership as there was in Methodism in the flush time of its revival power. Has a change come over it? Is a change desirable? Is a change to be expected? No! Let us have no radical change in our convictions as to what are the true functions

of the Christian Church. Let us have no radical change of opinion or practice as to what is the special mission of Methodism. Methodism is not a sacerdotalism. When it becomes thus mummified, it will be ready for its shroud of formalism and for burial. It is Christianity in earnest—in the present tense. (Dr Chalmers would not object to the added clause, even if it does seem tautologous.) Methodists when saved become soul-savers in some form of Christian service. All are to be at it, and always at it, as long as they live on earth. To build up the Church in the true New Testament sense of the word is not only to polish its living stones, but to work in new material. The saints fall on sleep every generation, and others must take their places in the militant Church. The baptized children of the Church come to the point when they should ratify the baptismal covenant made by their parents, and make covenanted blessings theirs by choice. Shall we wait for a revival to take them into full fellowship? Not necessarily. But the right sort of a revival, at the right time, raises a gracious tide of spiritual power that sweeps them over the bar into the port—the bar of worldliness, or doubt, or indecision. Thus a large percentage of our membership came into the Church; how large, the reader may be astonished to learn if he will make inquiry. And for backsliders, the periodical revival is the reopening of the gates for their return to the fold they have left.

This is the true history of the revival in Methodism, and it is largely the same in other evangelical bodies. It is not a question of theory, but of facts—facts all pointing to the same conclusion, namely, that this is the method owned and blessed by the Holy Spirit. Its development among us

was providential beyond question: its maintenance is demanded by every consideration affecting the salvation of men and the glory of God. All that can be truly said as to false methods and false revivalists may be assented to freely without any discount upon the value of genuine revival work. Satan never fails to counterfeit as far as he can any good work he cannot stop. The lying wonders of Simon Magus counterfeited the gracious miracles of the true disciples of our Lord. This short chapter, which came in of itself, so to speak, as a reflection on a personal statement, may end here with this remark: The time may come when Methodist and other evangelical bodies can afford to dispense with revivals, truly so called; but the child is not born who will live to see that time.

TAKING SHAPE.

TAKING SHAPE.

MY life in Lynchburg began at the age when a boy grows fastest and is most impressible. He takes shape in body and soul between his first teens and early manhood. I learned to set type in the printing office of the *Lynchburg Republican*, and acquired a taste for journalism that has never left me. That part of my schooling, in the order of divine providence, was destined to have a very positive influence upon all my after life. That was a time of intense political feeling and sharp political debate. It was also a period during which religious controversy ran high. Political discussion and denominational debates were carried on earnestly by a people who had strong convictions and much loquacity. The Whigs and Democrats, nearly balanced in numbers, contended for political supremacy. Virginia was always at the front in those days; every voter was also a propagandist, and every youth an incipient statesman, at least in his own estimation. My naturalization was rapid, though not without friction and tribulation. Lynchburg boys of that day were like all other boys of all other times and places. They were of the normal type, and loved to wrestle, box, swim, and shoot. Being a new boy, I had to run the gantlet—that is to say, to fight every boy of my own age and size, or back down when challenged. My blood and my home teaching did not incline me to nonresistance. In fact, I always had a relish for fighting. It is certain that I had all the fighting I wanted. The names of Kirkwood Otey,

Paul Banks, Henry Orr, Walter Withers, Beall Blackford, Nick Floyd, and others, come to my mind—boys with whom I had battles that were drawn battles, none of us at any time getting enough drubbing to prevent renewal of the fight when occasion offered. Those Lynchburg boys were made of true metal. The strength of the hills was in their frames, the inspiration of a glorious history was in their souls, an heroic heredity was in their blood. They fought fairly, and never cherished malice, giving and taking hard knocks without flinching. In the “war between the states” these Lynchburg boys made their mark. They marched with Stonewall Jackson through the Valley of Virginia, and followed Lee in his wonderful campaigns. Braver soldiers never wore uniforms.

The Christian religion will, in its final triumph, bring in the reign of universal peace. The time is coming when the nations shall learn war no more, when swords shall be turned into plowshares, and spears into pruning hooks. Of this I have no doubt. Not only does the word of God promise it, but it seems to me patent that if Christianity stopped short of this result it would be to that extent a failure. In the happier age that is coming, war will be looked upon as a horrible feature of a darker period of the world’s history, when the evolution of God’s purpose to give to the world knowledge, truth, freedom, and peace through the gospel of Jesus Christ was in its earlier and incomplete stages. The noncombatant theories were not taught me in my boyhood, and the world had not then reached the promised time of peace. Cowardice was held to be a sin and a shame among men and boys everywhere. The whole American nation was possessed of this martial spirit, and it

has led us to make presidents of our successful generals, from Washington to Taylor and Grant. I fought my way to peace among the Lynchburg boys.

I am a noncombatant now in theory, as it seems to me all New Testament Christians ought to be. But it would perhaps be as awkward for a nation in this year of our Lord to announce and act upon noncombatant principles as it would have been for a Lynchburg youth among his companions a half century ago. Combativeness has hitherto been invariably a constituent element of human nature. It is in the blood, instincts, and history of our race. Hero worship has been the universal religion. What is to become of the combativeness after the era of universal peace has dawned? Will it disappear? Or, will the love of conflict find legitimate exercise in other and higher fields of activity? Progress is the law under which the world moves in its pathway through the ages—progress by conquest, progress by overcoming obstacles and beating down opposing forces of whatever kind. To him that overcometh is given the promise to eat of the tree of life, and of the hidden manna; and to him will be given the white stone in which the New Name is written which is known only to its recipient; and to him will be given power over the nations. But the weapons of this warfare are not carnal. The victory that overcometh the world is the victory of faith. What does that mean to the reader? The true answer would reveal his status and trend.

FORMATIVE INFLUENCES.

FORMATIVE INFLUENCES.

FORMATIVE influences! This heading for this chapter presents a riddle. Who can know or analyze the agencies or influences which have made him what he is?

During the years of my stay in Lynchburg I was employed first in the newspaper office, and afterwards in a bookstore, and last of all as a post-office clerk. I read everything I could lay my hands on—mostly the newspapers of the day. The party press of both sides engaged my youthful mind, and I became an expert in partisan phrases and catchwords, if not an adept in constitutional law and political legislation. I adopted opinions at this time that I still retain, and became subject to prejudices and partialities that will be buried only in my grave. In the selection of my reading I had no guide save my own whim or choice or the limitations of my purse. If it could be so, I would be glad even at this late day to blot from my mind the memory of some things I read during this period of my life: bad books that were read out of mere curiosity and thrown aside with disgust. Curiosity! How many young persons start on the paths that lead to hell to gratify curiosity! The first vicious book, the first step in any of the ways that take hold on hell, is thus taken by so many that follow in the footsteps of the first transgressor in this world's tragic history.

In the choice of my companions I exercised the same freedom, having no guide save my own preference or the relationships naturally springing out of my environment. If any reader of these pages

doubts that man is a fallen being, and that the trail of the serpent of sin is all over this earth, he has had a different experience from mine, or he must draw a different conclusion from the same facts. The vileness of what many youths call "fun" exceeds even its idiocy. Respect for my mother, and a voice in the inner soul that was never silenced, made me turn away from profanity or obscenity if I could, or to hear it with disgust if I could not shut it out. But it was no more possible for a boy left to himself to escape contact with foulness of speech than with foulness of the printed page. Thus it came to pass that I heard as well as read much that it is painful to remember—the pain being mixed with gratitude to God for the repulsion that was always felt at its polluting touch. Let me say it just here: Never for one moment of my life have I committed any sin, or come into contact with sin in any of its grosser forms, without feeling such a repulsion for it as to prove to me that the Holy Spirit has never left me nor ceased to move upon my soul since I crossed the line of moral accountability. Reading over that last sentence, and knowing it to be the affirmation of a fact, my heart is lifted in silent gratitude to God as I write these words. I would close this paragraph with a word of advice to any young person who may read what I say: Be simple concerning evil. Do not start to hell from curiosity. Ignorance on these lines is pleasing to God and honorable to yourself. The flippant assumption by young people of a knowledge of the world on its dark under side is at once a weakness and a wickedness—a weakness to be ashamed of, a wickedness to repent of. Avoid alike the idiocy of such a pretension and the vileness of such an experience, O youthful reader, whoever you may be.

Two men's names drop from my pen point here while I am speaking of the formative influences of my youth. They were both great and good men, though of different types. The one was Doctor William A. Smith, of the Virginia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. To his own generation he was well known—a giant in debate, one of the foremost leaders of his side in the struggle that ended in the division of the Church in 1844. He was indeed a grand man. Lion-like in port, with a voice to match, in the arena he moved as a conqueror. There was a limp in his gait from a crippled limb, but there was none in his logic. In debate, when sure of his premises, he was irresistible. His awakening sermons were terrible. Fortified by well-chosen Scripture texts, with exegesis and deduction clear and strong, he showed the sinner who listened to him that he was on an inclined plane sliding down hellward, and that repentance or ruin was to be chosen then and there. He was as simple as a child, knowing no concealments as he knew no fear. He believed in Arminian (or Wesleyan) theology and in state-rights politics. He trained with John Wesley's followers in the Church and with John C. Calhoun's followers in the State. His call to preach must have been very clear and strong: nothing short of this could have kept him out of party politics. In either house of Congress he would have been conspicuous in the eyes of the nation. Whether he was ever tempted to turn aside in this direction, I know not. The devil has a way of taking such men up into a high mountain—the mountain of imagination—and showing and promising to them the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them. Such as have listened and yielded have found that he is a liar from the beginning. The preacher-

politician, as a rule, is a failure for both worlds. Tragedies along this line have come under my observation that are sad enough, if it were possible, to excite the pity of the arch deceiver himself. What Doctor Smith saw in me that attracted his notice and elicited his good will, I cannot tell; but it was a fortunate circumstance for me that it was so. When I was a clerk in the Lynchburg post office, he would come inside and talk with me for hours at a time. Rather, he would talk *to* me. He loved a good listener, such as I must have been then. Those monologues would be good reading now for persons who think. The only record of them extant is in the memory of the boy who heard them with wonder and delight. Forgetting that he had only a single hearer—and he only an inquisitive youth—the great man would unfold great schemes of thought, and argue and illustrate them with a power that was tremendous, and an enthusiasm that was charmingly contagious. The friendship of such a man was to me a blessing and an inspiration. At that time I was young, and impressible in many ways. My veneration for Doctor Smith was tinged with awe because of a story that his parsonage was “haunted” at night. The story was, that sound of the rocking of an invisible cradle by invisible hands went on night after night during the still hours when the family were abed and the world asleep. This was never denied nor explained. The supernatural touch, real or fancied, all of us respond to in our earlier years. It answers to something that is in us all—a belief in a world unseen.

The other personality that comes in here is that of Doctor Robert B. Thomson, of the Methodist Protestant Church. His benignant presence seems almost to pervade the room as I write his name.

He was a man of medium size, who looked larger than he was under the afflatus that gave him the pulpit transfiguration. His dark eyes glowed with the fires of thought. About him there was the indefinable magnetism that drew the hearts of the people, old and young, to him. He was eloquent in the truest and highest sense of the word. He had the clairvoyance that springs from the sympathy that flows out of a great heart filled with the love of souls. Doctor Thomson seemed to know my needs and my perils, and gave me touches that have influenced me to this hour. The worth of such a man to a community cannot be measured this side of the final judgment. For him there is in my heart an affection that is almost filial in its nature.

During all this time I lived in an atmosphere sweetened by the lives of holy women whom I met in the family circle and in the places of religious worship. Their faces shone in holy beauty, and their songs and prayers and good works made what is divinest in human character audible, visible, and tangible. Four of these—Mrs. Early, Mrs. Otey, Mrs. Saunders, and Mrs. Daniel—made a quartette so Christlike that unbelief was abashed in their presence, and all that was holy and beneficent bloomed within the spheres of their gentle ministries.

One of the formative influences of this period of my life is mentioned last of all, though not the least potent. From time to time the post would bring me a letter from my mother, breathing mother-love and telling me what was in her hope and prayers for me. Tear-stains were on the sheets, and my own eyes grew misty as I read them. Her love held me fast, and inspiration was in the thought that well-doing on my part would give her joy.

Her prayer touched God, and God touched me. My blessed mother! She trod the paths of pain and toil and heartache and self-sacrifice through all her life. I was too blind to see what I owed to her while she was yet living her life of service here on earth. Like too many others, the mother-love with its self-abnegation and self-devotion—the self-abnegation that denies nothing that love demands, and the self-devotion that gives all that love can give—I took as a matter of course. I now see more clearly and feel more deeply what I owe to my mother. May I here express the hope that some day, somewhere, I may meet her and tell her the love and gratitude that are in my heart? Some day, somewhere?

FOUR OLD-TIME REVIVALISTS.

FOUR OLD-TIME REVIVALISTS.

FIRST in my memory is George W Dye—Father Dye he was called by the people—who in family prayer at my father's house seemed to talk with God as friend talks to friend, and who at the old Sharon camp ground on a Sunday morning, as it seemed to my boyish mind, turned loose a spiritual cyclone upon the awe-stricken multitude. The revivals he conducted were of such a character that no one who believed at all in a supernatural religion could doubt that they were the work of God. Gamblers, debauchees, profane swearers, and even drunkards, were powerfully converted—to use a phrase that has been current among the people called Methodists. The expression is just right: in no other way could they have been converted at all. Sin is a powerful enslaver: Satan is a strong tyrant, holding the castle of the human soul. The power that dislodges him must be still stronger. The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. Power! Those old circuit riders had it. All substitutes for it are worthless. The more machinery you have without power, the more worthless is any organization. Father Dye types a class not yet extinct.

Another one that comes to mind was George W Childs—the most ghostly-looking man I ever saw. His frame was tall and thin, his step noiseless, his face as pale as death, and he had a rapt, far-away look that made him seem to be not of the earth earthy, as are common men. It was easy to believe that there is a great spirit-world after see-

ing this unworldly old circuit rider The strange power that attended his preaching could be accounted for in no other way It was said of him that he had lain in a trance three days and nights, that he was never known to laugh afterwards, and that he was never heard to speak of it. Whether or not like Paul he saw things not lawful to be uttered—or thought he saw them—we cannot say. But that then and there he had an experience of some sort, that thenceforward made him a changed man, is beyond doubt. Boy as I was, I was strangely thrilled and awed in the presence of this man of God—for such he was. His very looks refuted materialism.

The influence of William M. Crumley (mentioned elsewhere in these pages) has never left me since I last saw him in 1866. In the pulpit he too had that strange power that no one was ever able to analyze or explain. He was not eloquent in any ordinary sense of the word. His sermons were the most informal talks, in a subdued conversational tone; and yet it was no unusual occurrence for the crowded congregations that attended his ministry to be wrought up to the point of immediate surrender to Christ. In his own way he made a “still hunt” among his parishioners that found them all. No member of his flock was left unfed. He was a revivalist everywhere—he was himself a revival incarnated. I never heard him speak in a loud voice. I never heard him make an appeal to the emotions that was not also an appeal to the conscience. That I had even a short season of pastoral training with such a man is a fact for which I have never ceased to be grateful. He was a man of God: that solves the secret of his success.

A very different sort of man was Leonidas Ros-

ser, but he too was a revivalist whose power was the wonder of his brethren. He was by no means a quiet man anywhere or any time when awake. It is likely that even his dreams had a dramatic and pictorial quality. He was criticised, smiled at, and followed up and listened to by multitudes. Many were converted under his ministry. If there could be such a being as a sanctified dandy, he was one. The fit of his clothes, the pose of his body, the seemingly self-conscious look that never left him for a moment, the dramatic recital of incidents in which he himself was an actor, could not fail to elicit remark, especially in ministerial circles. (Note: Ministers in their proneness to criticise one another are not worse than other men.) But what was the secret of Rosser's power? It was the genuine earnestness of the man. He knew that the gospel he preached was the power of God unto salvation. His ineradicable Rosserisms were on the surface: deeper within his soul was the burning love for souls that somehow melts the hearts of the hardest sinners. He had a faith so mighty that all sorts of people, saints and sinners alike, caught its contagion. The individuality of the man was not lost, but the excellency of the power was of God. The quality of his ministry was attested by its fruits. He was a man of God, not without human infirmity—where is the man who is not?—whose natural gifts as a speaker and charms of personality were supplemented by that one element that differentiates human eloquence from apostolic power.

Here is another revivalist, presenting a contrast to Rosser in every particular save one: John Forbes, a local preacher, who during many years was as a flame of fire over the Dan River region in Virginia and North Carolina. He was a man of the

people; poor as to this world's goods; without book learning, except that found in the one Book of books; living in a cabin that could not be called a cottage without a verbal strain; a tall, gangling, ungainly, genial, free-and-easy sort of rural apostle. He was as guileless as a child, and feared not the face of man. The common people heard him gladly, while the more cultured listened to him with wonder. His sermons presented two points: the terrors of the law, and the freeness and fullness of gospel grace. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"—that was his message; he had no other. It was God's own message, and it had God's own attestation. According to the promise, it killed and made alive. Critics were disarmed, scoffers were silenced, quibblers were confounded, cavilers were convinced. If it was not the power of God, what was it that wrought so mightily by the ministry of this large-boned, large-featured, unlearned, simple-hearted, farmer-preacher? Because of his plainness of speech on one occasion some lewd fellows of the baser sort threatened to give him a beating if he ever dared to hold another meeting in their neighborhood. Their threat did not frighten Forbes, who soon afterwards began a special protracted service among them. The threat of the offended parties had been given wide publicity, and a vast congregation assembled, many of them drawn by the expectation of a row. The old preacher opened the service with the usual exercises, and then announced a text embodying his one pulpit topic—the certainty that unrepented sin would be punished, and that God was ready to bless and save all who would truly repent of their sins. Toward the close of the sermon, in describing the security of the faith-

ful and their final coronation, he “got happy,” as the plain country people expressed it—that is to say, his soul was flooded with the joy of the Holy Ghost. “Where are those fellows who came here to-day to whip me?” he asked. “Why, He would not let a thousand such harm me. Where are they?” he repeated; and as he spoke, with his eyes shut and his rugged face shining, he left the preaching stand and made his way up and down the aisles, exhorting as he moved. “My God,” he exclaimed, “wouldn’t let fifty thousand sinners whip me to-day!—but boys,” he continued with a sudden overflow of tenderness, “he is able to forgive and save you all this day,” placing his hand upon the head of one of the opposing party as he spoke. The effect was indescribable. A mighty wave of feeling swept over the entire assembly amid songs and shoutings on the part of believers, with tears and sobbings among the unconverted. The preacher got no whipping that day. The meeting was kept up. Among its converts were most of the hostile gang who had come to whip the preacher.

When the old man died he did not own enough of this world’s goods to buy a burial lot, but his name is as ointment poured forth in all that Dan River region, where on both sides of the state line so many of the holy dead, whose images rise before my mental vision as I write, are sleeping in Jesus, awaiting the morning of the resurrection.

“The treasure is in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be seen to be of God, and not of men.”

A UNIQUE PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIENCE.

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THAT was a curious sort of school that I taught. The teacher, his methods, and his classes were all unique. I look back upon this episode in my life with amused surprise—if that is a good phrase with the right meaning. My father, animated by patriotism and zeal for the war party to which he belonged, had gone as a soldier to the Mexican war, in which he did his duty, was crippled for life, came back alive, and drew a pension from the government with patriotic punctuality to the end of his life. During his absence I lived at home with my mother. The neighbors, who always over-rated my learning, requested me to open a school for their children, and I did so. I had about sixty pupils, ranging from the alphabet up as high as I could go. Classification was after a system—no, a method—of my own: system was not in it. Some of the older pupils had formerly been my schoolmates; and if they did not know more than I did, it must surely have been their own fault. We all did pretty much as we pleased, and had a good time. The government of the school was mild, but mixed. The use of the rod was then still in fashion, but I did not use it often. The switches that were kept in sight behind my desk were placed there mainly to satisfy the expectation of my patrons, and for moral effect. One bow-legged boy—still living at this writing—at the end of six months had failed to master the alphabet under my instruction. There were other pupils who knew more than their teacher, especially in

mathematics, in which he was never strong: these were kept busy in other studies in which he was more advanced. The good will of all concerned supplemented my shortcomings.

Some of my old pupils are still living. When now and then I meet with one of them, the greeting on both sides is hearty. Few of them are left. When we meet in the spirit-world, there will be a look of inquisitiveness in our eyes: the inquiry will then come up, What did we do for each other back there at that old-time school in those old days? Not much was done, but something. My pupils got the best that was in me then; and the fact that I was their teacher and exemplar made my best better than it would otherwise have been. That is the way God educates us. Tests come to us that reveal to us our ignorance and weakness. Responsibility comes to us to steady and strengthen us. If you would teach a boy to swim, throw him into deep water. The youth who is petted and praised and coddled at home until he thinks it a great feat to rise and dress himself for breakfast, and believes that the chief functions of young manhood are to excite the admiration of one sex and the envy of another, thrown on his own resources develops a latent manhood that astonishes himself and all who know him. Necessity is the mother of manhood in action. Many men have saved their boys by losing their money. Just as many have ruined their boys by making money for them without training them for its use. At times I have been tempted to harbor in my soul a complaint that the fortunes of the family to which I belonged went down in my youth to a point so low that I lost the advantages and opportunities of other youths of my own age. But perhaps oftener I have thanked God that by my poverty I escaped in some measure the perils that were

fatal to so many of them. It might have been that with a better mental training and a broader culture my life would have been larger and more fruitful of good. Or, it might have been that with the freer use of money, giving me access to indulgences out of my reach, with the lack of the spur of necessity to labor, I might have been one of that great army of young men of my country who were victims of plenty—slaughtered by the vices that lie in wait for youth when it is idle and full of passion. Adversity is a good mother. Prosperity is a deceiver to many

The pupil that got most good out of that unique school was myself. My knowledge of some of the branches taught was increased, and the dignity of pedagogy, while it did not sit easy on a youth of my temperament, was a good thing for me to feel or to assume. The country schoolmaster has been described by Washington Irving and many others. There were some among the rural pedagogues who had scholarship, discipline, and moral force, but there were many others no better qualified for the work of education than I was. It was not time wasted after all. Those big barefoot boys and rosy, laughing country girls learned a little, and I learned a lesson that has been relearned by me many times since—namely, that all I did not know would make a very big book. The attempt to teach something that you think you know will give you a clear perception of the difference between vague notions and true knowledge. If a term of teaching, long or short, could be included in every post-graduate course, there would be fewer failures by men who sport degrees. If there is any wisdom in this suggestion, and if any will act on it, let it be put to my credit.

All this time the Methodist Church kept its arms

around me, never withdrawing them for a moment. I heard the preaching of its preachers, I read the *Christian Advocate* and such miscellaneous Methodist reading as was then current in country districts. The ubiquitousness of the itinerant system was illustrated in the fact that in town or country, at home or on my travels, I have never for one day of my life been beyond the reach of the wide-reaching arms of that branch of the Church of Christ called Methodism.

IN RICHMOND IN THE FORTIES.

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AT the close of the war with Mexico I went to Richmond, Virginia, and there abode for some time. Richmond was then noted for big Whig majorities, plucky Democrats, abundant Baptists of all shades of color, lively Methodists, fine-toned, middle-of-the-road Episcopalians, and Presbyterians who knew their catechisms and walked with God. The *Whig* and the *Enquirer* had for many years kept up a political duel of national notoriety and influence. They furnished ammunition and watchwords for the partisans of Henry Clay and Andrew Jackson over all the land. There was a touch of chivalry in their fighting that was admirable, but it did not suffice to avert a tragedy that made good men of all parties mourn. The duello was even then an anachronism: grown men playing Ivanhoe after Ivanhoe and his like were dead and buried. By virtue of the ability of its party organs, the zeal of the local following, and the traditions of the past, Richmond was then virtually the political capital of the Union. The place was always in a political whirl. The women did not think of voting and holding office, but every one of them who was not busy in Church work was in some way active in politics. Some were busy both for the Church and the party they loved. The Baptists had great swing with the negroes in Richmond at that time—and have not lost it yet.

The African Baptist Church was a wonder to visitors from the North and from the old world who came to Richmond with the notion in their

heads that negro slavery was indeed the sum of all villainies, and that a slaveholding community was divided into only two parts—brutalized black slaves and cruel white owners. For the thousandth time I repeat here that I am glad that slavery is gone. It had to go. It had its day, and it had done its work. But let me say, what has been better said by wiser men, that the roots of all that is most hopeful in the present condition and prospects of the African race in these United States of America, and in all the world, including Africa, are to be found in the work that was done for them by the evangelical Churches in the South before the abolition of slavery. The Baptists and the Methodists led in this good work for the negro race. On the one side, immersion appealed to the love of the spectacular that is in them. Freedom of speech and in song appealed to a race that is full of eloquence and full of music, on the other. It has been a close race. That God may still bless both sides, and the final victor be made to do his very best to win, is a prayer in which all good Methodists and Baptists may join. The gospel of Christ will solve the negro problem, and all other problems, in its own good time and in its own best way.

The two preachers I heard oftenest in Richmond were Doctor David S. Doggett, Methodist, and Doctor T V Moore, Presbyterian. They were pulpit princes of the first rank. The descriptives that would put Doggett before the reader would be: lucidity, elegance, vigor, unction—with emphasis on the last word. He drew and delighted, edified and held admiring crowds. His pulpit power made him a bishop and sustained him in the office. He was a light that burned and shined. In administrative genius and parliamentary tact he was not notable: in the pulpit he did

a work and made a name the Church will not let die. In an enumeration of the ten foremost preachers of American Methodism, the name of David S. Doggett could not be omitted. About Doctor Moore there was a charm that everybody felt but none could fully define. He was a tall, spare-built man, with a face that was pale and scholarly yet strong, with a resonance in his voice that pleased the ear while he reasoned of heavenly things and persuaded sinners to be reconciled to God. He read his sermons, but he read them in such a way as to make the hearer feel that he was listening to a confidential letter that the preacher had studied out and prayed over for his special benefit. He being dead, yet speaketh. And in the Richmond pulpit of that day stood Anthony Dibrell—a tall, dark man, with the port of a prophet of the Lord, from whose sermons flashed the lightnings of Sinai and the glory of the cross. By every token, he was a man of God. There was also Doctor Leonidas Rosser, a mighty revivalist in his day—a man with the fervor and almost the eloquence of a Whitefield. His hortatory power was extraordinary. He touched his word-pictures with the strongest colors: he was a master of the adjective in the pulpit, if ever a man was. Great congregations were moved under his preaching, and whole communities were swept into the current of the revivals that attended his ministry. There was Doctor John E. Edwards, a declamatory whirlwind set to music—a man of small stature physically, firmly set, with a large, well-shaped head, blondish hair and skin, bright deep-blue eyes that flashed or melted as he spoke, and a voice as clear as a silver trumpet, and enunciation the most rapid of any man I ever heard. A distinguished American statesman, after hearing him preach,

said: "There are two great declaimers in the United States—Rufus Choate and John E. Edwards—and the greater of the two is Edwards." Then there was Doctor Leroy M. Lee, who was the editor of the *Richmond Christian Advocate*, then in the prime of his powers—a man who was ready for a tilt with any and all persons opposed to Arminian theology and Methodist polity. He was a man of convictions, and fed his readers and hearers on strong meat. It was a sturdy sort of Methodists that were reared in the families that took and read his paper. They could give a reason for the faith that was in them. In the pulpit he was inclined to polemics and pugnacity, but could and did often preach a gospel that was tender and sweet and joyful—because the old editor had felt its tenderness, its sweetness, and its joy. Doctor Lee had in his physiognomy and in his character some of the features that belonged to that other Lee of Virginia who led in the field the armies of the Confederate States of America. These men were my tutors while I was still in a special sense in the formative period of my life. There are others whose names come to my mind, but I forbear. Their influence I thankfully acknowledge, and will never lose.

Among the men I then met in Richmond was Edgar Allan Poe. I have a very vivid impression of him as he was the last time I saw him on a warm day in 1849. Clad in a spotless white linen suit, with a black velvet vest, and Panama hat, he was a man who would be notable in any company. I met him in the office of the *Examiner*, the new Democratic newspaper which was making its mark in political journalism. It was ultra state rights in tone. John M. Daniel, its editor in chief, put into his editorials a caustic wit, a free-

dom in the use of personalities, and a brilliant rhetoric that won immediate success. Even the victims of his satire must have admired the keenness of his weapon and the skill of his thrust. There was a natural affinity between Poe and Daniel. Arrangements were made by which the scope of the *Examiner* was to be enlarged, and Poe to become its literary editor. Through the good offices of certain parties well known in Richmond, Poe had taken a pledge of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. His sad face—it was one of the saddest faces I ever saw—seemed to brighten a little, as a new purpose and fresh hope sprang up in his heart. The Richmond people did a thing for him in a way that had the old Virginia touch. He was invited to deliver a lecture; the price of admission was fixed at five dollars a ticket, and three hundred persons were packed into the assembly rooms of the old Exchange Hotel at that price. The remarkable essay on “The Poetic Principle,” found in his prose works, was composed for that occasion. I had the pleasure of hearing it read, and remember how forcibly I was struck with his tone and manner of delivery. The emphasis that he placed upon the dictum that the sole function of art was to minister to the love of the beautiful was especially notable. With the \$1,500, the proceeds of the lecture, in hand, he started to New York for the purpose of settling up his affairs there, preparatory to entering upon his work on the *Examiner* in Richmond. The tragic sequel is well known. Stopping in Baltimore *en route*, he attended a birthday party to which he had been invited. The fair hostess pledged him in a glass of wine; he sipped it despite his pledge; that sip was as a spark of fire to a powder magazine. A few days afterwards he lay dead in a hospital, where he died of *mania a potu*.

He had the sensitive organization of a man of genius, and for him there was no middle ground between total abstinence and drunkenness. The thought will press upon the mind: Who can estimate the loss to American literature by this untimely death? During the two tremendous decades from 1850 to 1870 what might he not have achieved on the lines of his special endowment? The sudden quenching of such a light in such a way is a tragedy too deep for words. It was the work of the alcoholic devil—the devil that some young man who has genius, or thinks he has it, may be hugging to his bosom as he reads this page. God pity such folly! Is it not time that this devil were chained in a Christian land? And should not every good man and woman help in doing it? I am not sorry that I took an humble part in the effort to save Edgar Allan Poe from the doom that overtook him. [A different and more favorable account has been given of Poe's death by a recent writer of respectability and evidently good spirit. The account given by me is that which was current at the time.]

Thus my schooling, such as it was, went on in Richmond—taking in religion, politics, literature, and whatever else was going on at the time. It was a taste of many dishes that had a keen relish for a youth who loved to read and was a student of human nature in his own way. I was pulled this way and that by opposing forces and conflicting ideas; but by the grace of God Methodism had the strongest hold on me, and kept it.

AFLOAT.

AFLOAT

THE word that makes the heading of this chapter describes the state of my mind and the manner of my life for some years just before and after I had reached twenty-one years of age. I was afloat. My inherited beliefs were under review. Every young man who thinks at all comes to this point. I read everything that came within my reach. I talked with all sorts of people on all sorts of subjects. Among these subjects was Swedenborgianism. Having heard that John C. Calhoun was a disciple of that wonderful Swede, Emanuel Swedenborg—seer, madman, enthusiast, as you like—I felt a desire to know more of the man and his system. After reading his “Arcana Celestia,” the treatise on “Heaven and Hell,” and his other works, I reached the conclusion that Swedenborg had as clear a view of some phases of religious truth as any other uninspired man; that much learning and thinking made him mad; and that at length he mistook the dreams and vagaries of an overwrought mind for divine revelations. I am glad that I read Swedenborg’s works, and feel assured that they left a deposit with me of profitable suggestion that I will never lose. He was a visionary, a man to be classed with dreamers and theorizers rather than with the few elect spirits who have been the real religious leaders of the world. The first notable Swedenborgian I ever met was Richard K. Cralle, of Lynchburg, Virginia—a man whose brain was as massive and as angular as the unique dwelling built by him on one of the many hills of that hilly city on the spark-

ling, swift-flowing James. This house was called "The Castle." It was built of stone, turreted, many-windowed, with corridors winding in and out, like a fortress of the middle ages, with a weird, ghostly effect that gave rise to a belief among the colored people and others that it was "haunted." I had heard Mr. Cralle read some of Mr. Calhoun's letters to him, in which his religious beliefs were expressed with the freedom of intimate friendship. Swedenborgianism is a queer compound—fascinating, elusive, disappointing. It has enough of scriptural and philosophical truth to whet the appetite of the reader, but lacks coherence, solidity, credibility, and symmetry. Swedenborg is not a lamp to light our path in the night, but an aurora borealis that flashes across the cold and darkened skies of speculative theology. So I think, having in my thought just now a number of Swedenborgian friends whose beautiful lives proved that they are walking in white with their Lord the Christ of God.

The glamour of Universalism flashed upon my pathway during this time—a belief that always had an unsatisfying charm for me, but for which I can find no sufficient warrant in the teaching of the Bible, nor in the analogies of nature, nor in the unchallenged facts of human history. In certain sentimental moods all of us have Universalist fancies or impulses. But God in his word declares that the soul that sinneth must die, and his administration throughout all departments of his government of the universe illustrates the awful truth—the awful necessity, let us say.

Unitarianism attracted my attention, through the writings of some of the gifted men who professed and expounded it; but it never disturbed my mind for one moment. The divinity of Jesus Christ can-

not be questioned without impeaching his veracity. The divinity of Jesus Christ cannot be denied without denying the record given of him in the New Testament Scriptures. Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh, or he was——stop! I will not write the words that imply the admission of doubt. He was very God as well as very man. Unitarianism may be toyed with by dilettanti, and by a class of religionists whose hearts challenge what their pride of intellect would deny; but it never had, and can never have, any large following among people who believe the Bible and have the true heart-hunger of earnestness in the search for rest to their souls.

Calvinism staggered me then, as it does now. I have known so many grand and good men and women who were Calvinists, or thought they were, that I feel like lifting my hat when I hear the name of the inexorable old logician of Geneva. When we speak of the divine foreknowledge and the free agency of man, and all correlated facts, we are easily confounded; but when we read that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man, the doctrine of election seems clear enough. Here it is: "The elect are whosoever will; the nonelect are whosoever won't." That is about the way they all put it now. I never got anything but good from a Presbyterian pulpit or book.

By some sort of instinct, or by some sort of good fortune, I began about this time to move southward. I never did like cold weather. When the thermometer sinks toward zero, my physical comfort sinks with it. The familiar hymn that speaks of heaven as a place where there are "no chilling winds" always had a special charm for me. One winter I spent in Raleigh, North Carolina. The

Raleigh of that day was unique—a city whose very groves of oaks and stately old mansions had a quiet dignity in keeping with the character and manners of the people. It was not a fussy or garish capital; it was serene and sound. The state legislature, then in session, was a study. Its lower branch was presided over by Mr. Dobbin, afterwards Secretary of the Navy under President Pierce's administration—a man who combined the polish of a French courtier with the wisdom and honesty of a patriot whose head was clear and whose heart was true. His opposite was General Cotton—a colossal commoner from Chatham county, whose oratory had a cyclonic energy, whose figures of speech were as gigantic as was his own physique, whose orations excited wonder among his colleagues and applause in the galleries. The *Standard*, the Democratic organ, was conducted by William W. Holden, a sturdy, scholarly-looking man with heavy black eyebrows and pallid complexion, who then harped on state rights and hurraed for Andrew Jackson. The *Register*, the Whig organ, was conducted by Gales and Seaton, and had long been an exponent of the policies and a supporter of the candidates of the party whose idol was Henry Clay. Among the preachers I heard in Raleigh was Doctor Rufus T. Heflin, one of its Methodist pastors—a man whose face was that of one who held secret communion with God, and whose preaching had that indefinable yet unmistakable quality, the unction from on high, that differentiates the true preaching of the gospel from all merely human oratory. This man and his preaching were a link that bound me still to the Church in which I was born and baptized.

I spent a season in Columbia, South Carolina. It was then as now the capital of that state; and a lively capital it was in that day of big cotton crops

and other big things, good and bad, to match. It was an aristocratic city then, having an aristocracy of birth, an aristocracy of money, an aristocracy of brains, and an aristocracy of courage. Wade Hampton, son of the father so named also, was then a roystering young fellow with a practically unlimited bank account, a lover of sport, and afraid of nothing—typical of the rich young Southerner of that day. The genius of John C. Calhoun and the scholarship and oratory of William C. Preston and others like them had inoculated South Carolina and its capital city with their opinions and inspired their youth with their ideals: patriotism was a passion and the hustings and the forum the ladders to civic glory. Chivalry was not a misnomer with those South Carolinians. The one unpardonable sin in a public man was cowardice: it was the one thing despised by all men in all the grades of society. The fashion, so to speak, set in the direction of a lofty public virtue and an ardent and uncalculating patriotism and state pride, and chivalry that was well named. That chivalry was at times rash and passionate, but it had its roots in convictions that were genuine, and a devotion that was absolute. Doctor Whitefoord Smith was the preacher I heard oftenest in Columbia—and what a preacher he was! All sorts of persons crowded to hear him. He had the easy swing of the hustings and the brilliant rhetoric of the schools, the evangelical glow of a man of prayer and the polish of a man who knew and loved the classics. Methodism in South Carolina was then aglow and moving. Bishop William Capers was in the prime of his strength—a man who was a Chrysostom in the pulpit, a Barnabas to the sorrow-stricken. Doctor William M. Wightman was then editing the *Southern Christian Advocate*, published at Charleston,

and he was putting into it the vigorous thought, logical method, and elegant diction for which he was distinguished. He was afterwards a professor in the Southern University, and then made a bishop; but he never did better work for his Lord and for the Church than when he was editor of its organ in South Carolina. The Methodism of the state and of its capital was strong enough to be seen and felt even by a wayfarer. It made for me an atmosphere warm enough to keep alive in my soul the seeds of truth that had been sown therein. The arms of my mother-Church were still around me, holding me back from evil and ruin. If these pages shall ever see the light, how many readers will be ready to join with me in thanksgiving to God for the influence of Methodism which goes everywhere and always carries a blessing! And how many will also be ready to join with me in a prayer that it may never lose the love that impels its movement, or the light that shines upon its pathway of blessing.

A TURNING POINT.

A TURNING POINT.

AN attack of typhoid fever was a turning point in my life. It came to me in the city of Macon, Georgia. I was a stranger, and at a hotel. The mulatto boy, Albert, who waited upon me, saved my life. The doctors had given me up to die. I heard them say to the boy: "Give him anything he asks for." I made a sign that I wanted ice water, and it was brought—a pitcher full, cold as it could be. I drank, and drank, and drank! I felt the coolness to my very finger-tips, and said to myself inwardly, "I will get well"—and I did. It was the ice water that did it. The surprised doctors postponed the funeral that they expected. I came up out of the jaws of death, and by slow degrees appetite and strength came back to me. I had time to think and pray, to look at my past life, and to ponder the paths of my feet. By a happy coincidence the mulatto boy, who was my nurse, belonged to the man who became my bosom friend—Robert A. Smith, that unique combination of lawyer, soldier, and saint, of whom I have written elsewhere. Chivalry of the highest type of the old South and saintliness as sturdy as Luther's and as tender as Fletcher's were blended in this man. He crossed my path in the providence of God at a critical moment in my life, and I shall thank God forever that it was so. In a prayer meeting, or by the bedside of the sick or the dying, I never heard a man pray who seemed to be nearer to God. At the head of his military company, the Macon Volunteers, I never saw a knightlier figure. He was

what will be regarded as a strange anomaly in the good time coming for this earth—a Christian soldier. It is distinctly promised in the word of the Lord that wars are to cease to the ends of the earth, and that the nations shall learn war no more. This is a strange thought in this day of war ships that cost millions of dollars each, huge standing armies, forts, arsenals, and military schools for which the masses are loaded down with taxation, and peace is kept between civilized nations by fear and skillful balancing of power rather than by reason, persuasion, and religion. Civilized nations, did I say? It is not Christian civilization, surely. The Prince of Peace will bring in another sort—and it will be here in this world, for it is his world. He shall reign until all enemies are put under his feet. War is the child of sin, and the enemy of all that is good. The groans of the dying victims of the sinking war ship *Maine*, in the harbor of Havana, are in my ears as I write to-day—February 23, 1898—mingling with the music of the song of universal peace heard by the ear of faith as it comes nearer and yet nearer.

That robust yet tearful evangelist, Doctor James E. Evans, was then pastor of the Mulberry Street Methodist Church in Macon. He was a great man all round—a Church financier of the first order in ability; an expository preacher, who rightly divided and pointedly applied the word of truth; a weeping prophet, whose tears were not the expression of nervous weakness and shallow sentimentality, but the overflowing of a mighty soul travailing in agony over lost souls. All Macon was stirred by this deep-toned preacher, who had power with God and man. This revival wave struck me when I was ready for it. On my sick-bed and during my convalescence the Holy Spirit

had spoken to my soul the things that made for my peace because I was quiet enough to listen. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet to the testimonies of God with a solemn earnestness born of reflection and under the leading of the Holy Spirit that had followed me and striven with me all my life. Kneeling at the chancel with others one night never to be forgotten, amid prayer and holy song, Doctor William H. Ellison bent above me and softly spoke to me some words that helped me then and there to give myself wholly to the Lord—to choose the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, with a purpose to follow him as long as I lived. There was no reserve in my consecration. Heaven came into my soul—the heaven of holy peace, and the joy of the Holy Ghost. The experience was unspeakably solemn and sweet. Yes, thank God, it *is* unspeakably solemn and sweet, for I feel it now, as I did then. It is the same in its quality, but—let me write it with humility and adoring thankfulness—it is fuller and deeper after the lapse of years between the early fifties and this, next to the closing years of the nineties. I need not give a name to this experience. The initiated reader knows what it is; the uninitiated may know. Whosoever will may take freely of this water of life; and he may do so now.

INITIATED.

INITIATED.

THE year 1854 was the date of my entrance upon the traveling ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as my life work. The only discount upon my grateful joy in recording this fact is from a consciousness of my shortcomings. But God in his grace and goodness has so borne with me and sustained me during all these years that gratitude ought to be the dominant note of my song—and it is. The Georgia Conference met at Atlanta that year. The Atlanta of 1854 was smaller than that of to-day, but it was of like quality—wide-awake, busy, but not too busy to be hospitable. Bishop William Capers presided; J Blakely Smith was secretary. It was a venerable body of men. Somewhat has been said of some of them by me elsewhere. To them Georgia Methodism is indebted for much of what it has achieved. For the secretary, Brother J Blakely Smith, I felt a peculiar regard as a friend and brother. This special friendship between us had its beginning in a singular incident, which is here recited for a good purpose, after some hesitation. It happened in this way. Secretary Smith was a large-framed man, with florid complexion, deep, strong voice, and a masterful way in what he said and did. Not knowing him as he was, my first impression concerning him was unfavorable. He seemed to me to be impatient and rude in his treatment of a large proportion of the preachers of the Conference. My ideal of the ministerial office was a most lofty one, and I was shocked and grieved

at what seemed to me so palpable a violation of ministerial and brotherly courtesy. My surprise and resentment increased daily. At length, during a forenoon session, E. P. Pitchford, a venerable and holy man, one of the patriarchs of the body, rose just in front of me and asked the secretary some question pertaining to the business of the Conference. The answer was crusty, even to rudeness: in substance it seemed to imply that it was a silly question, such as only a simpleton would ask. A look of pain came over the good old man's face; he stood a moment in silence, then sank into his seat, bent his head forward shaded by his hands, while the tears coursed down his cheeks. Before I knew what I was doing I was on my feet, and being recognized by the bishop I said: "Bishop Capers, I am not a member of this body, but I ask leave to say a few words just now." "Proceed, Brother Fitzgerald," said the saintly and courtly man in the chair. "What I want to say is this: that the secretary of this Conference seems to have two sets of manners. To you, sir, and to the titled and more distinguished members of this body, he is polite almost to excess; but if he has once spoken kindly to any of the younger men or the less notable older men of this Conference, I have not heard it. Look at Father Pitchford, who sits yonder in tears of humiliation: if he had been a dog, he could scarcely have been spoken to more scornfully." Just then I began to realize what I was doing under the impulse that had come upon me—the sort of impulse I always feel at any exhibition of arrogant officialism or tyranny of any sort. But a shower of "Amens" rose all around as I sat down with a flushed face and heart aflutter.

The secretary rose to his feet with a pale face

and trembling voice. "Brethren," he said, "is this that Brother Fitzgerald has said of me true?"

"Yes," said the venerable Allen Turner; "yes, we have noticed it, and talked of it, and grieved over it."

A number of assenting voices responded in different parts of the Conference room.

"As God is my judge," said the secretary with deep emotion, "as God is my judge, I did not know it. My natural manner is rather brusque or abrupt. To you, bishop, and to the older and more distinguished members of this Conference, to whom I have been accustomed to look up with reverence and admiration, my manner may have been more deferential than to other members of the Conference. But I love every member of this body: if there was any rudeness in my manner, it was not in my heart; and as to Father Pitchford, I feel as if I could go to where he sits, kneel at his feet, ask his forgiveness, and bathe his feet with my tears. And as to my young Brother Fitzgerald," he continued with profound feeling, "I honor him for what he has done, and will always love him. He spoke out to my face in open Conference what was in his heart, while my older brethren only censured me privately, never speaking to me of my fault."

There was a true man! He became from that day my devoted friend; and the more fully I knew him, the more I admired and loved this able-bodied, warm-blooded, great-souled Georgia preacher. The moral of this incident, narrated with some hesitancy, is: First, that a good man may err unconsciously in his bearing; and, second, that criticisms behind his back are not likely to do him any good. It may be noted here that when I started to California Blakely Smith accompanied

me from Macon as far as Fort Valley on a cold, frosty morning, saying: "I want to be the last Georgian that gives your hand a farewell shake." He has passed over into the world of spirits. If he were here on earth, his manly nature would understand the motive that prompts me to recall this incident of the far-away past.

Blessed be the memory of those old Georgia preachers! About the time I had gotten through my impulsive arraignment of the secretary, it occurred to me that I had committed ecclesiastical hara-kiri; that that company of venerable and holy men would look upon me as a pert and pragmatic youth, unsuited to the solemn and delicate functions of the Christian ministry. But they took me to their hearts, and made me feel the glow of affection which has not cooled to this hour. I was admitted on trial with expressions of hearty good will that would have moved a colder man than I think myself to be. Dear old Georgia! my second mother on the religious side. May the God of our fathers smile on their children's children unto the latest generation!

Thus was I initiated.

MY ENVIRONMENT.

MY ENVIRONMENT

I WAS fully initiated into Church relationship in Georgia, and I shall always be thankful that it was where it was, when it was, and how it was that this came about. My environment was favorable, and God was leading me. Georgia Methodism was then very powerful, a militant army accustomed to victory. Look for a moment at the men who stood in her pulpits and served at her altars. The two Pierces—the father and son, “the old doctor” and the bishop—were then at the zenith of their power and popularity. George F. Pierce was then the pulpit star of Georgia—an Apollo in physical beauty, a pulpit orator possessing every quality that excites the admiration and delight of listening multitudes, and, best of all, gifted with a spiritual insight that enabled him to flash into the hearts of sinners the search-light that made them see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Georgia was magnetized by this favorite son. His personality pervaded the state. The last declamation or pungent aphorism of “George Pierce,” as he was fondly called to the last, was current coin in all circles of society in Georgia. That state is richer to-day because his genius was sanctified genius. This well-worn word is used thoughtfully in this connection: sanctified genius is the highest human instrumentality that God uses to bless the world. The “old doctor,” Lovick Pierce, the father, was not as “flowery” or rhetorical or brilliantly declamatory as his son, but it was the undoubting belief of many of the elder Georgians of that day that he

was the profoundest thinker and the ablest expounder of the Scriptures then living. He was truly a marvelous preacher—deeply spiritual, with a mighty sweep of thought and a vocabulary to match, with the unction of the Holy One that literally made his face to shine. He delighted in the grandest themes, and his diction had the roll of evangelical thunder. The simple grandeur of his character had a charm for all sorts of people. The rudest rustic of the backwoods, the profoundest jurist, and the most learned scholar alike held him in reverent esteem. That mighty man of God, Samuel Anthony—“old Ironsides” he was fondly called by his admirers—was preaching sermons that stirred to the depths the consciences of entire communities. Single sermons by him almost wrought moral revolutions where they were preached. He did not fear the face of man, and shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God. His tall, gaunt, sinewy figure, his rugged features and severe simplicity of dress were in keeping with his character and his message. At times he rose to heights of almost supernatural grandeur of thought and expression, and at others he melted into a tenderness that was overwhelming. In the one mood he was an Elijah; in the other, a Jeremiah. My faith in God is stronger to this hour because I heard the sermons and prayers of this old Georgia hero-saint. And there was William M. Crumley, a wise and holy man, a spiritual battery always charged; John W Knight, an eccentric genius, who in one mood was ecstatic as an angel and in another wished he were “a black cat”; Eustace W Speer, whose short expository sermons sparkled with gems of wisdom and flashes of rhetorical beauty from the first sentence to the last; Ed-

ward H. Myers, who had the gift of usefulness more than that of popularity, a scholar worthy of the name, a preacher who preferred to profit rather than merely to please his hearers, a teacher who put conscience as well as capability into his work in the schoolroom; William Arnold—"Uncle Billy," as he was familiarly called—who combined common sense and uncommon spiritual power in the pulpit and in the councils of the Church; Jesse Boring, a man of genius and a man of many tribulations, whose sermons at times reached the most startling and effective climaxes; John M. Bonnell, whose saintliness and scholarship made him a sort of Georgia Melancthon; John C. Simmons, sturdy as a Georgia oak, fervent as a typical summer; Alexander Means, in whom pedagogy, poetry, and pulpit eloquence were delightfully blended; Augustus B. Longstreet, best known as a humorist, but whose best work was done in the pulpit and in the classroom, whose influence impressed on the fleshly tablets of the hearts of his pupils will last when his "Georgia Scenes" may be forgotten; John P. Duncan, a sunny-souled man, whose sweet spiritual songs helped to float many a penitent over the bars of unbelief into the still waters of peace; and then a lot of younger men, some of whom have since made their mark: John W. Burke, the friendliest of the friendly, a lover of children and beloved by all; J. O. A. Clark, a thinker whose logic was tuned to love; J. W. Hinton, who hewed huge masses of truth out of the quarry of inspiration and built them into homiletic structures solid and stately; W. P. Harrison, a walking encyclopedia of religious knowledge, guileless as a child, wise with the wisdom that comes from above; Thomas F. Jordan, an eloquent man of sanguine temper,

who kindled quickly and set his hearers aglow; George G. N. MacDonell, a crystal of Christian character without a flaw; Oliver P. Anthony, a kingly-looking man with soul to match, whose heart was as gentle as that of a woman, whose courage was that of a knighthood when knights were knights indeed; Robert W. Bigham, who on both sides of the continent has lived a life and preached a gospel that made many to see the beauty of divine truth and to follow Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; W. H. Christian, who is a man with that gift of common sense which the Head of the Church is always ready to utilize for its edification; W. F. Glenn, an Israelite without guile, an editor whose work is pitched on the New Testament plane, a man whom it is impossible not to love and to trust: these, and many more not less worthy of mention, were then at work as Methodist preachers in Georgia.

For a special reason I mention one more name—that of William Davies, one of the young men who was then just starting in the ministry. He was a tall, handsome man, ruddy-faced, blue-eyed, graceful in every motion, and of presence magnetic. He came of a preaching family, but for a time he had been “wild.” In one of the deep-reaching revivals that were prevalent in Georgia in that day he was powerfully converted—that is the old phrase; the initiated reader will understand it. He heard and obeyed a call to preach which immediately followed his conversion. “Fitzgerald,” he said to me one day, “I love God more than you can love him: he has done more for me than for anybody else on earth”—his eyes swimming in tears as he spoke. I have had the same feeling many times. Who that ever felt the joy of pardoned sin has not had it? Under the ministry

of such men as these a living membership was brought in and built up in the Church—men like Matthew Rylander, whose prayers opened the gates of heaven and brought glory from the mercy-seat; Ed. Salisbury, whose songs had the touch that was sweeter than art could give, the touch of the live coal from off the altar; Thomas R. R. Cobb, a statesman who in public life exhibited the integrity and ability that befitted his sphere, a Methodist who in his private life united a humility that was most beautiful with a social glow that was irresistible; Walter T. Colquitt, politician and preacher, Methodist and Democrat, strangely mixed, a very brilliant man; Robert Toombs, whose Methodist wife, together with his friendship for George F. Pierce, brought him into close touch with Methodism. Pierce and Toombs—the bishop and the senator—were classmates at the University of Georgia and close friends all their lives. It is said that once in a confidential mood Toombs laid his hand on Pierce's knee, saying, "George, I want you to take me into the Church." "Why do you wish it? Are you ready to begin in earnest a Christian life?" asked the bishop. "No, George," replied Toombs, "I am not fit for membership in the Church. But I have a fear that I may die suddenly some day, and some fool might say that I was a skeptic." From the United States Senator to the humblest walks in life Methodism in Georgia was regnant, touching all classes and making an atmosphere for its adherents warm with spiritual life. The class meeting was still a living institution of the Church in Georgia, in which its young life was watched over and developed in a way that promoted stability and growth. I was enrolled at once as a member of a class—the one led by Robert A. Smith, of whom I have spoken

elsewhere, and whose name, as my eye falls upon it on this page, makes me feel like saying: My God, I thank thee that there is such a thing in this earthly life as Christian friendship, and for the hope that it will be renewed and perfected and perpetuated in the unending years that await us in the world of spirits.

MY FIRST SERMON.

MY FIRST SERMON.

IT must have been foreordained that I was to be a preacher of the gospel. A sort of presentiment that it was to be so had been with me from my early boyhood. It was in Doctor Penn's prayer at my baptism at two days old. It was the wish and the expectation of my mother. It was like a prophetic undertone through all my previous life. My Methodist brethren and other Christian friends now seemed to expect it. Three things entered into my call to preach, as it seemed to me then and as it seems to me now—the moving of the Holy Spirit, the consensus of the Church, and God's providential leadings. I was first licensed to exhort—a function now almost disused, but once greatly magnified among Methodists. Some of these exhorters preached well: some preachers only exhorted warmly. Exhortation ought to be a part of most sermons. Not every zealous young man waited for official license in those days, for the Methodists of the time had felt, believed, and hoped for what was worth telling. They had liberty. The class meeting was a school of the prophets in a gracious sense. The leaders were not always learned in literature, science, philosophy, or art, but as a rule they were wise in things pertaining to practical religion. They knew the Bible, they knew Jesus as a Saviour, they knew human nature, they knew human life, and they gave to many young men the first impetus toward the pulpit. Taking a portion of Scripture, I began to expound and exhort. The exposition was doubtless most elementary in its

quality, and the exhorting was what might be expected from a young exhorter whose chief tenet and profoundest feeling were that Jesus Christ was the Saviour of sinners in the present tense.

My first sermon was preached in a Presbyterian church. It happened thus: I was on a visit to my kindred in North Carolina. On a bright Sunday morning I had driven with my sister Martha over to the old Bethesda Presbyterian church, near the line between Caswell and Rockingham counties, with the expectation of hearing the Rev. Dr. J. G. Doll, a distinguished preacher of that denomination. On our arrival I saw that the grove around the old country church was crowded with horses and vehicles of all sorts, from the stylish family carriages of the rural "quality" down to the most primitive carryalls and lean-bodied nags of the poorer sort. As I drove up to the edge of the grove that songful old saint and elder, Uncle Johnny Jones, who seemed to be watching for me, came up, took my horse's bridle, fastened him to a swinging limb of an oak, and after helping my sister to alight took me aside.

"Oscar," he said very solemnly, "you must preach here to-day."

"Uncle Johnny, I am not a preacher," I answered, flushing with a peculiar feeling that came over me.

"You have been holding meetings, haven't you?" he asked.

"Yes, but only prayer meetings among our Methodist people: I have no license to preach," I answered.

"Oscar, you *must* preach here to-day!" said the venerable man with deep solemnity. "A note from Dr. Doll tells me that he was seized with sudden sickness and is at Yanceyville in bed, un-

able to get here. You see what a great crowd of people have come out to hear him, some of them living ten miles or more away. There will be a great disappointment if we have no preaching, and harm will result to the cause of religion. Oscar, you *must* preach!"

A struggle had been going on within me while the good old man was speaking. I felt that the hour had come for the decision of a momentous question. I said:

"Go into the pulpit with me, conduct the preliminary exercises, and then I will do whatever I feel I ought to do."

"All right," he said cheerfully

As I walked down the aisle of the church, it seemed to me almost that it was a league in length; and as I sat in the pulpit and glanced at that waiting congregation, the faces seemed to multiply themselves indefinitely. It was a clear case of pulpit scare. The dear old elder was a sweet singer and gifted in prayer. When he had finished I had a text ready, and a full heart. The text was Jeremiah xii. 5: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" That sermon will not here be given even in outline—if outline it had. But if ever I have had "liberty" in preaching, I had it that day. Many of my old schoolmates and early friends were in the congregation, curiosity and sympathy mingling in their consciousness. A great tide of feeling swelled up from the depths of my heart and overflowed all. We all wept together. The old elder praised God, and old Bethesda was aglow. I had my license to preach: surely the

Lord had settled for me the question of my vocation. His Church had already been drawing me the same way. The Church and its Head draw the willing soul in the same direction when the Holy Spirit has control. Dr. Doll came up the next day: special services were begun, and many souls were brought to Christ. Surely the Lord has his own best way of working. My life-work was found, and my soul was flooded with a peace that was the peace of God.

PREACHING TO THE BLACKS.

PREACHING TO THE BLACKS.

ON my return to Georgia I received a local preacher's license in the city of Macon. Shortly thereafter Dr. Mason, who had charge of the negro Methodist congregation, died, and I was put in charge of it. I have a lively and grateful recollection of this experience. Those black Methodists were numerous, responsive, musical, and demonstrative to a degree that was astonishing to uninitiated visitors. They gave me their hearts and helped me much in many ways. My first Sunday with them was memorable for the prayer that followed my attempt to preach. I had called on Abram McGregor, the patriarch of the flock—a tall, black man, with high cheek bones, a face whose lines were all strong and good, and a soul that loved God and feared nothing but sin. By virtue of his strength of character and deep piety he was a sort of patriarch and untitled king among his people. He prayed at my request: "O Lord, we thank thee for de gospel which has been *dispensed wid* on dis occasion, and which de people have listened to wid so much patience. Bless our young brother wid a big heart and a weak voice"—and so on. I have never heard a more honest prayer, and in some of his verbal lapses the old man spoke wiser than he knew.

My predecessor, Dr. Mason, was a high-met-tled Christian scholar and teacher, spontaneous and trenchant—a man of work. He spoke his own thoughts in his own way. He was one of many men of large ability and deep piety who gave

their service to the negroes in those days, helping to prepare them for the tremendous changes that were swiftly coming. The colored Methodists of the South had as good preaching as the white ones before the war between the states. In fact, as a rule they had the same preachers. If now and then a weak or doubtful young brother was sent to a colored charge as an experiment, the same thing was done with white charges. It is a blessed thing that slavery is gone. It is also a blessed thing that before their emancipation through the zealous ministry of the several Christian denominations in the South—the Methodists not the least—the negroes of that section had attained the rudiments of Christian civilization sufficiently to make the transition both desirable and safe. The world's equitable second thought is already beginning to see this. The Christian people of the South did well for the negroes, all things considered, under the old régime. But their work for them is not all done. They have a duty to perform in the present tense—the duty of giving them the gospel in its fullness of power and plenitude of blessing. In discharging this duty they will at the same time conserve their own highest interest and the welfare of the colored millions dwelling in their midst. I am at the date of this writing (February 3, 1898) still glad to lend a helping hand to this work in behalf of the negro race, and there is surely an open door. This seems to me a good place to say: The opportunity waited for does not come; the good work you can do comes to you when you are ready for duty.

SENT TO SAVANNAH.

SENT TO SAVANNAH.

I WAS "read out" to Andrew Chapel, city of Savannah, junior preacher, with William M. Crumley as my senior. The ride on the railroad from Macon to Savannah was memorable to me. I was quite a young man, and that day felt that I was even younger than I looked. The question came into my mind: What will the Savannah Methodists think when they see me? Will they not ask themselves, What was Bishop Capers thinking of when he appointed such a boy to preach in such a city as Savannah? The tempter rode with me all the way—making, as it now seems to me, a final and desperate assault on my faith and courage as a minister of the gospel. I pictured to myself the astonishment and disappointment of the good people when they saw how raw a youth had been sent to them clothed with pastoral authority. The suggestion presented itself: Why not flee from such a trial? Why not go to one of the hotels, on your arrival at Savannah, spend the night, and on the morrow take passage on a steamer to New York? The difficulties, humiliations, and trials of the position assigned me presented themselves to my mind most vividly and persistently as I swept along on the cars. If a personal devil ever assaulted a young preacher, he assaulted me then and there. I had sinister companionship that was invisible, but not unfelt, riding through Georgia that day of trial. While thus agitated by conflicting feelings and distressful thoughts, the train rolled into the station—lo, we were at Savannah! Before I had time even to look at my hand-bag-

gage, several kindly-looking gentlemen came walking through the cars with inquiring faces. One of them paused as he looked at me, and said:

“We are looking for Brother Fitzgerald, the young preacher who has been appointed to Savannah—do you know whether he is aboard the train?”

With a sort of dazed feeling I told them that I was the man, and almost before I knew it they had me and my baggage in a carriage whirling rapidly along the streets. The carriage halted, and one of the brethren said:

“Brother Fitzgerald, here we are at Brother Stone’s, where you are to stop.”

A motherly-looking lady met me in the hall, and after a very kindly greeting said: “Come with me, and I will show you your room.” Leading me upstairs, I was shown into an elegantly furnished apartment. “This is your home,” said the good lady; “here you will stay while you live in Savannah. Come down now and get some supper,” she added cheerily, leading the way into the dining room, where a nice hot meal was waiting.

It was all like a dream. In spite of my previous misgivings and depression, I actually began to feel comfortable. The mother-touch had reached me. Blessed be God for the women who have that touch! Without them how much darker and colder would be this world into which so much of trouble and pain has somehow found entrance! Whoso hath felt true mother-love finds it easy to believe in God’s love. Among the memories of my life that will not fade is that of this Savannah couple—Marshal Stone and his wife. He, the former city marshal, was as soldier-like in character as Andrew Jackson, whom he greatly resembled in personal appearance. A tall, grave-

faced man, with thin lips and firm-set features, he could have been stern in his looks but for a serene benignity that made you feel that he was a strong man to trust rather than a strong man to fear. That was Marshal Stone—a man who hated all that was mean and loved everybody. His wife was the most spontaneous, irrepressible, quaint, outspoken, witty, and practical of uncanonized saints. She said the queerest and did the kindest things all the time. Even in her most solemn religious moods and acts there was often a touch of humor; her most humorous sayings and doings had often a tender or solemn side that gave her acquaintances many a surprise. Her descriptive powers were such that her narratives and dialogues were almost as vivid as life itself. This couple had no children of their own, and having ample means at their command they were the benefactors of every good cause and the helpers of all who needed help in Savannah. They belonged to the Methodist Church, and gave it love, labor, and money without stint. I linger on their names, with a tenderness in my heart—as well I may. They gave me my first preacher-home, and with a grace and heartiness all their own provided for all my wants, without money and without price. “This is your home,” she said to me on the night of my arrival—and she made it so in the fullest sense of the word. When I meet them in the home of the soul—this is my undoubting hope now—that home will be more a home to me because I shall see their kindly faces and hear their kindly voices. Many traveling preachers whose eyes may fall on these lines will echo the prayer: Father in heaven, give thy special grace and abounding mercy unto these children of thine who give homes to thy ministering servants; grant

that their dwellings here may be blessed with thy continual benediction, and that they may reach that home above where the family of God shall live together with him in whose presence there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore. *Amen.*

SAVANNAH.

SAVANNAH.

THE Savannah of 1854 was unique in its blending of simplicity and repose with a polish and sparkle in its social life that gave its old denizens the undoubting conviction that it was the best place on earth, and made it easy for a new-comer to fall in love with the place. The old Southern tone was dominant, but there was an infusion of Northerners sufficient to give somewhat of the briskness and breeziness that are found wherever Yankees are found in all latitudes of earth. The rule in that day was, that the Yankee who came South to stay did so because he had an affinity for the people and fondness for the climate. What fire-eaters were many of them in politics! What sticklers for "strict construction," and all that sort of thing! The peripatetic Northern travelers who came on a visit to make trade, or for professional letter-writing for the newspapers, were of different types, and had a different standing. Believing that these visitors were looking for the seamy side of Southern society, that was the side shown to them. "I am a truer Southerner than you are," once said a lawyer from Connecticut to me; "you are a Southern man by birth, I by choice." The rule worked both ways: there were Southern-born men that exhibited every peculiarity that made the word "Yankee" synonymous with everything that a brave, generous soul dislikes. Sectionalism was then absurd, unjust, and hurtful, disgusting in its grosser forms. Neither the North nor the South had a monopoly of that or of any other silliness or mean-

ness. When the war between the states came, these Northern-born Southerners were among the first to go to the front, and they spilled their blood freely for the cause of the South. Abraham Lincoln and George H. Thomas were both Southern-born men who are canonized as political saints in the calendar of the North. Admiral Farragut was also a Southerner by birth. The accident of birth means nothing as to ingrain quality. The sectionalist in the broad, vulgar sense of the word has been a nuisance in both sections of our country. He may be tracked by the marks of blood and fire. A sectionalist in this evil and narrow sense of the word is an anachronism in these United States in this year of our Lord 1898. He is lonesome, and soliloquizes mostly when he says anything in his own bad way.

But I am digressing, and will come back to Savannah, *ante bellum*. Dreamy, delightful, seductive old Savannah! I have not seen it for more than forty years, but the memory of it is fresh and sweet and sacred. If I were a poet, I would put its Bonaventure Cemetery into verse. It is itself a poem. There is nothing just like it elsewhere: the live-oak avenues, draped with the long sea-moss, gently stirred by the soft breeze; a sky that bends in deepest blue above, with no sound to break the stillness save the faint note of a song bird in the minor key, or the whisper of a breeze like "the sighing of broken reeds" that symbolizes that of breaking hearts. Sidney Lanier might have sung the song of Bonaventure had he seen it as I have seen it. The elegance of the city and the heartiness of the country met you in the old Savannah in a way that gave you wonder and delight. The gentlemen of the old school were so gentlemanly in their own lofty, easy-going way;

the women of the old school were so ladylike in their own gracious, queenly way; the tradesmen were so urbane and so neighborly, rather than sharp and shoplike; the old negroes were so grand, and the young negroes were so jolly, in the old Savannah, that whoso once tasted the flavor of its life never lost its charm. And its religious life was of a type all its own. The Baptists were numerous and zealous, both among the white people and the negroes. The negro Baptists were led by Andrew Marshall, a black apostle whose word was law among them, and whose life was patterned after that of his Lord. The Roman Catholics were Romanists naturalized, liberalized, and largely evangelized by their Georgia environment. The Presbyterians were as solid as if molded in Geneva, and as sunny as a Georgia landscape in a clear October day. The Episcopalians were a people who had scholars in their pulpits; whose high-churchism was not noisy; whose traditions were comforting to themselves, but not obtrusive; whose social life was for the most part very sweet. Their Bishop Elliott was a colossal and æsthetic giant, gorgeous-looking in his episcopal robes; a man who knew botany and theology, who held to the tactual succession in the ministry, and was a judge of good painting and good eating. And the Methodists—the stirring, wide-awake, militant, moving, musical Methodists of Savannah—they went everywhere, and had a hand in everything good that was going on, now and then making a tangent under a sudden impulse or inspiration. The presiding elder was John W. Glenn, who personally looked like the pictures of Martin Luther—sturdy, thick-set, heavy-jawed, large-brained, firm of lip, with a gleam in his eye that was martial or tender as occasion demanded. I have seen him walk the floor

like a caged lion, chafing over follies that he saw but could not abate in ecclesiastical administration; again, I have seen him the center of a social circle where good fellowship reached the high-water mark; and again, and yet again, I have seen him in the pulpit, the incarnation of ministerial fidelity, pleading with sinners with melting tenderness, expostulating with backsliders with awful earnestness, or calling believers up to the heights of holiness where the sun shines night and day. He knew the blessed paradox expressed in that last clause of the foregoing sentence—in the night of sorrow and pain as in the sunshine of gladness alike, he walked in the light of the Lord. And my senior was William M. Crumley, a low-voiced, slow-moving, magnetic man, whose persuasions brought multitudes of souls to the pitying Christ, whose prayers at the bedside of the sick and in the chambers death-darkened made a channel for the stream of heavenly peace and comfort to souls that were burdened and hearts that were broken. During the epidemic visitation of yellow fever—that oft-recurring scourge of scourges of our South Atlantic seaports—sectarian lines were obliterated: Crumley, who stayed at his post of duty, was the pastor of all classes, rich and poor alike; and when it was over, his name was tenderly spoken by thousands in the homes of the smitten city. The Christian heroism developed during these awful visitations illustrates a compensatory law of God: they leave the stricken communities sorrowful and poverty-smitten, but richer in all that is precious in Christian civilization and ennobling in human character.

TO CALIFORNIA.

TO CALIFORNIA.

FROM Savannah I was called to go to California by the fatherly and apostolic Bishop James O. Andrew. That such a man as he should become the center of a fierce sectional struggle, is one of the strange things that now and then take place in this strange world. I will not even briefly rehearse that story here. We have already had too much of it. Let us not dig up any buried quarrels, but rather scatter every seed of love that we can gather from the past. The dear old bishop made the call, and I obeyed. My sturdy and strong-willed presiding elder, John W. Glenn, in what he felt to be righteous wrath, paced the floor and stormed against my going. But I went under a strong persuasion of duty. Savannah gave me a motherly farewell. My pen lingers on the page as the image of one woman comes up before my mind—that of Mrs. Marshal Stone, who had given me a home and almost a mother's love. Her thoughtfulness in my behalf blessed every step of the journey and made itself felt long afterwards. It was of the sort that forgets nothing and grudges nothing in doing a kindness. I started on my journey with her kiss and her tears upon my face. And what a journey it was! Its first episode was one never to be forgotten—one to be thankful for forever. At Enon, Alabama, a quiet little village on Chunnenugee Ridge among the pines, I took a companion for my California trip, and for life—and she has been my good angel from that hour to this. We started five minutes after the ceremony that united our

lives. She sits on my left, sewing, as I write this by lamplight on the evening of March 23, 1898—God bless her!

At New Orleans we spent a few days, including a Sunday. It was then a gay metropolis, Frenchy in its glitter, Southern in its glow. Its brunette beauties shaded off into octoroons with rounded forms and laughing faces, deepening into the honest, solid blackness of the genuine negroes, who kept in Louisiana the complexion and the jollity they brought with them from the Congo. It was a jolly city in that day, unlike any other American city. The *Picayune* of that date was one of the unique newspapers that had a flavor and a field all its own, with a touch of indigenous literature in its columns and a *bonhomie* that gave it a national good will. Sunday was mostly a French Sunday—that is to say, it had much frolic and some religious worship. Here I met for the first time McTyeire and Keener, afterwards made bishops. McTyeire was editing the *New Orleans Christian Advocate*, and winning his spurs as a thinker, writer, and leader in the Church. The questions he asked me, and the things he said to me, went straight to the mark, and made me feel that I had met a man who was a mind-reader, and who knew all that was going on. Keener was a presiding elder, whose quaintly classic and incisive sayings and heroic methods were much talked of even then. “Yes, he’s a *Keener*, sure enough!” said an admirer, with a chuckle, quoting one of his sharp sayings. These two men strongly impressed the young preacher who has always found a fascination in the study of men. To this day I have not forgotten the preaching of Dr. J. B. Walker at the Carondelet Methodist Church on Sunday. A small, well-knit, dark-skinned,

black-haired, heavy-whiskered man, with brilliant black eyes, with a fluency that was almost miraculous in its rapidity, with a rhetoric that was ringing and an enunciation that was as clear as it was quick, he preached for about thirty minutes—it seemed less to me—and quit when in full motion, leaving, as it seemed to me, everybody wishing he would go on. A Gulf breeze was not fresher than his thought; his manner was as graceful as the movement of a clipper-ship under full sail. Years afterwards I made an earnest effort to bring Dr. Walker to San Francisco, believing that if any man could get a hearing for Southern Methodism in that city, he was the man. But who knows? He might have met there his pulpit Waterloo, as not a few other notabilities have done in that city, which has its own climate and its own way of thinking, speaking, and doing on all lines of thought, speech, and action.

Linus Parker was then a young preacher in New Orleans, and had begun to attract attention and admiration by writing articles for the press that were out of the usual style—original in thought, with subtle touches of insight and flashes of beauty that made the reader stop, re-read, and linger with delight over his charming page. He was elected to the office of bishop in 1882. Overwhelmed with the weight of the responsibility thus incurred, he grasped my hand with tears in his eyes, and said: “My brethren have made a mistake; I am not suited to the place.” Sweet-souled, finely-tuned Linus Parker! His humility was equal to his genius. His course as a bishop of the Church was quickly run. As ointment poured forth is his name.

A lively time we had in Nicaragua, *en route* to California. It was just after Walker’s first filibuster.

ter raid. The Nicaraguans naturally regarded all North Americans with suspicion and dislike. They were sulky, and we were watchful. At the "Half-way House," between the head of the lake and San Juan del Sur, on the Pacific coast side, we had a night adventure that was somewhat exciting. About six hundred native Nicaraguan soldiers had gathered there to meet Filibuster Walker, should he come again. There were about ninety of us North Americans. An enterprising agent of the evil one had opened a bar for the sale of liquor in a thatched shanty near by. Men of both parties drank freely. A half-drunken American and a half-drunken "Greaser" came to high words, and at length our man slapped the face of the other, with an oath. Instantly there was a clamor in angry, broken Spanish, as the Nicaraguans leveled their six hundred muskets at us. Almost as quickly, our men drew their revolvers, and stood ready. It promised to be a lively and not altogether unequal fight—six hundred tawny natives armed with old flintlock muskets, on the one side, and ninety North Americans armed with their deadly quick-shooting revolvers, on the other. It was a critical situation—the pulling of a single trigger on either side would have made bloody work. I was in the front of our party, mounted on a mule, unarmed, perfectly sober, but somewhat anxious. The women of our party were seated in wagons, the rest of our men, like myself, being mounted on mules ready to start. Acting upon an impulse, advancing a few steps to get in sight and hearing of both parties, I lifted my hat and said:

"Gentlemen, I have witnessed this whole difficulty from the first. This fellow"—pointing as I spoke to the man who had assaulted the Nicaraguan

—“is mostly blamable for all the trouble. He is the aggressor, and is a disgrace to the American name.”

Amid approving grunts from the Nicaraguans our half-drunken American began an interruption, when a tall Pennsylvanian of our party, who spoke Spanish and had acted as my interpreter, turned quickly upon him and, placing the muzzle of his revolver within an inch or so of his head, said sternly:

“Hush, you scoundrel! If you speak another word, I will blow your head off.”

The ruffian did not speak again; he saw the flash in the tall Pennsylvanian's eye and caught the ring of decision in his voice. (When I put in this parenthesis the statement that this Pennsylvanian was Captain James McLean, many old Californians will recognize him as the popular “Jim” McLean who was so well known in the southern mines—as brave a man as ever wore a soldier's uniform. He had won distinction and his title in the Mexican war.)

Seeing my opportunity, I said: “Gentlemen, let this fellow stay here and drink and quarrel and fight if he wishes to do so, but let us go on our journey, and take care of these women who are under our protection. All in favor of so doing say, Aye.”

Every man save one shouted, “Aye!” The right chord had been struck—no American worthy of the name ever fails to respond when appealed to in behalf of woman. We *are* a gallant people, though not always entirely consistent in dealing with women and the woman question—so called. There is not much of a “question” about it where the Bible and a true manhood, rather than whisky and infidelity, decide.

“All right, here we go!” I shouted, putting the spur to my little mule; and away we went under the tropical stars, our men giving “Three cheers for the women!” as we started. It was an exhilarating gallop of fourteen miles; and when the steamer’s lights at San Juan del Sur came in sight, how we shouted! That was my first glance at the world’s great ocean—the Pacific, so called—and it was a glad sight as matters stood with us that night.

ON THE PACIFIC SIDE.

ON THE PACIFIC SIDE.

ON the Pacific side—so this chapter is headed. But it was a misnomer as we found it. In the Gulf of Tehuantepec the storm on the sea was startling to a landsman; even the oldest sailors looked anxious as the stanch ship rolled and tossed on the billows, the wind blowing a heavier gale than I had ever seen before. One of the sailors—a robust, friendly-faced Irishman—gave me a piece of wisdom that I have not forgotten. Meeting him on the guards of the vessel about twilight, the sea rolling heavily, the wind whistling, and the ship pitching fearfully, I asked him:

“What sort of weather will we have to-night?”

“I’ll tell you in the morning,” he answered, looking at the sky, his eye twinkling as he spoke.

He was an old sailor. He had learned the lesson that comes to most men who live long in this world—this lesson, namely, that it is safer to prophesy after, rather than before, the event. A hasty or passionate prediction commits him who makes it to an irrational and obstinate effort to bring the thing to pass. The storms of life cannot be predicted in advance; the mystery of life cannot be understood now. We will be told in the morning. That glad morning will come—the morning that will be followed by no night of darkness and storm. For it we must wait. For it we can wait without mistrust or impatience, knowing that in every crisis we may look for the One mighty to save to come to us walking upon the sea. No night is too dark, no sea too rough, to keep him from coming when we need his help and comfort.

On the Pacific side, did I say? Those early years of California history had in them but little that was pacific. What a transition for me from Georgia to California, from dreamy, even-going old Savannah to the newness and rush and roar of San Francisco! The first thing that impressed me was that everything and everybody seemed to be unsettled. The spirit of 1849 was still in the air in 1855. Each person seemed to be ready for "a strike" of some sort—to make a strike, or to be struck. Scarcely any one seemed to have any fixed plans or expectations. The pulse of California beat fast and strong, but irregularly. It all seemed very strange to me, and it had a sort of charm that was indefinable. There was a morbid element in that early life in California, and it induced habits of thought and action that became chronic with many. Once a Californian, always a Californian, in this sense. The gambling element—the disposition to take chances for the big things and the little things that were to be gained or lost in the turn of life's wheel of fortune—was everywhere pervasive.

Bishop Andrew presided at the session of the Pacific Conference held at Sacramento City, April, 1855. That fatherly and apostolic saint had an heroic vein that ran all through him. When told that there was an impression prevailing in some quarters that his mission to California was to wind up the Southern Methodist Conference and abandon that field, he said, "If that is what is wanted, they sent the wrong man"; and as he said it there was a compression of the lips and a flash in his eye that bespoke a true chief of the militant Church. Martyr metal was in him: for a principle he would have died as a matter of course without flourish and without fear. He was not in the

least melodramatic. His wife was with him—and the echoes of her voice are still heard and the fragrance of her presence still lingers there. Her face was an evangel. She was the Methodist Madonna while she was among the Californians. A woman came to see her one day while she and the bishop were with us in Sonora, the mining town where I did my first preaching in California. This woman had a history; she had then two husbands living in the same town, and a third elsewhere. She was passionate, impulsive, fierce in one mood, and pitiful and generous almost beyond belief in another. She came to bring some little token of good will to the parsonage—if that one-roomed board shanty on the steep red hillside may be so called—and there she met and was introduced to our Madonna. Lingerin, she sat and gazed upon the face so restful and benignant, so gentle and so holy in its expression—and suddenly, with a gush of irrepressible emotion, she rushed across the room, dropped on her knees, hid her face in her lap, and sobbed, “Mother!” This woman had been a sinner and had been much sinned against, and doubtless had longed for the mother-love which is so like the love of God. If that woman was not converted by that look, she was comforted, and must have had at least a momentary glimpse of that love divine which is the fountain of all the true love that blesses this world.

My first two years in California were spent in the Southern Mines, Sonora being my station—with Shaw’s Flat, Columbia, Brown’s Flat, Whiskey Hill, Yankee Jim’s, Mormon Creek, Chinese Camp, Jamestown, Poverty Flat, Woods’s Creek, Jackass Gulch, and some other minor mining camp, as my parish. Gold dust, whisky, gambling, fighting, shooting, and other things of the

sort, made life lively. The first four funerals that I attended told the story of life at the time in the mines of California—two of them were suicides, and the other two had been murdered. “Bang! bang! bang!” we would hear the rapid succession of pistol shots in the Long Tom saloon in the dead of the night. “Somebody is killed,” we thought, or said; and the next morning I would be called on to perform the funeral rites of the Church over the dead body of some poor fellow who had been shot down in that far-famed resort. It was run by old Ben Aspinwall—a huge-framed, adipose giant, who regarded such tragedies as a matter of course; who never became excited, taking things as they came; a strange old sinner, who would take the last dollar from a miner who bet against his faro-bank and as readily count out his twenty-dollar gold pieces to help in burying the dead or in charity to the living. I mention his name here with only a kindly feeling: the old gambler has for many long years been in some other world than this; this posthumous mention will do him no hurt. He was a typical man of his class, only bigger in body, of steadier nerve, and freer of hand than others. All my life I have heard of the proverbial generosity of professional gamblers. Is it true that they are notable for their generosity? And if so, what is the secret of it? The old proverb, “Come easy, go easy,” might explain it to some minds. But it occurs to me that the explanation may be found in the devil’s casuistry suggested to a gambler’s soul that if he will divide what he wrongfully takes from one man with another man who is needy, he will thus condone for his sin, and get a credit mark in his book of life which must be balanced at last. The devil always has a lie ready for all who will listen to him.

The life of California at that day was mostly young life. Young men ruled and rioted after their fashion. They were strong, passionate, credulous. Their sins were the sins of inexperience and passion in a new country. Their virtues were courage and hopefulness. They feared not God, man, or devil. They persuaded themselves that they were the starters of a new era of some sort in their new western world. They scoffed at the wisdom of the past, invented a slang all their own, and extemporized a moral code for themselves, conspicuously slighting several of the ten commandments. They struck out at a wild pace for an unknown goal. Mark Twain and Bret Harte have painted them to the life as far as they went. The names of the public men of California who died by the bullet or the bottle would make a long roll; but I would not, if I could, call these men back from the mystery and sanctity of death. The splendid manhood thus eclipsed makes as sad a chapter in real life as has been enacted on this planet.

CALIFORNIA AS WE FOUND IT.

CALIFORNIA AS WE FOUND IT

THE Spaniards and the Roman Catholics had long held possession of California; but manifest destiny was against their ownership and rulership. Republicanism and Protestantism were bound to supplant and succeed Imperialism and Romanism in California. That Romanism was a singular compound of strength and weakness. It was saintly and sinful. It was heroic, and it was evasive and illusive. Grand religious ideals and shameful worldly policies were blended in a way that excited mingled admiration and execration in ingenuous souls. The heroic and the saintly age of Spanish evangelization and conquest has registered itself in the very nomenclature of California, from San Francisco Bay to San Diego. What a saintly country in name! But what a devilish history! It is a mixture, and an evil mixture—the Church and the State. The kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of this world—God and mammon—left their marks. The Jesuit fathers were of two sorts—the devotees who believed with all their hearts, and the diplomats who schemed with all their cunning; the propagandists of the faith, and the tools of the Spanish political conquest. The writer who ignores the one or the other of these elements, in his estimates of the forces that operated in the Spanish settlements of America, will give a narrow, one-sided, and misleading statement.

The “Society of Jesus” on its religious side exhibited much that was worthy of its name—self-sacrifice, courage, consecration, enthusiasm, that dared danger and death for love of their Lord and love of souls. On its other and darker side, its

human side, it reflected the meanest, darkest, foulest, cruelest phases of the corrupt and bloody political governments of that time. The review of this history should burn into our souls the truth taught us by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, that his kingdom is not of this world. The union of Church and State is an unnatural union. It disorganizes the State and corrupts the Church. The history of the world has furnished no exception to the truth of this statement. The disorganization on the one hand, and the corruption on the other, have been measured by the extent to which this mesalliance has been carried. The abolition of the temporal power of the papacy did not come a day too soon for all concerned. The Methodist movement in Great Britain saved Protestant Christianity from the ruin with which it was threatened by its alliance with the State. The Greek Church has this fatal flaw. Lutheranism also has it. This Roman leaven must be cast out—and it will be. The unification of the Church will come by the separation from the State of all its branches, and their streams flowing into the one sea of love whose tides shall sweep away all divisions among the followers of the divine, risen, reigning Christ.

In California I knew men and women of the Roman Catholic Church whose nobility and sweetness of Christian character equaled the best among the multitudes of the noble and the good I have known among Protestants. If I get to heaven and fail to meet them there, it will be a great surprise and disappointment to me. I love all alike who truly bear the image of my Lord. My wish and prayer for the elimination of all bigotry and exclusiveness arise not from any lack of love for those from whom I am separated. It is because I

do love them that I want the barbed wire fences removed.

The Sunday bull fight was a California institution long after I became a citizen of the state. I never saw one—and never wanted to. Its brutality ought to have disgusted even the Digger Indians. It has often been described as a cowardly sport, but the man who could thus take the chances of impalement or of being ripped up by a tortured animal, and brave the righteous wrath of a mercy-loving God, exhibited a quality that was not heroic in any honorable sense of the word, but had in it a cruelty that was devilishly daring. A bull fight on a religious holiday tells the story of the California of that curious Spanish semi-civilization, with one part of Christian faith and many parts of many things utterly unlike it. The roots of that one thing that was good will remain; the evils, having in themselves the germs of dissolution because they are evils, will pass away. The bull fight will be read of in a future age with disgust mingled with incredulity; the religious holiday will be more and more what its name implies to the devout and cultured mind. To the credit of their religious teachers let it be said that the early Californians had the sentiment of reverence left in their souls. At the same time truth compels the admission that they were very weak and low in practical morality. The first gold-seekers did not make things better. Many of them left their regard for the ten commandments behind them when they started to the gold fields. When a newcomer expressed astonishment or indignation at the grosser exhibitions of vice, “You forget that you are in California,” an earlier immigrant would say with a smile of pity on his face. The multitude were doing evil, and it was easy to run with them.

THOSE EARLY CALIFORNIANS.

THOSE EARLY CALIFORNIANS.

THOUGH I was in California twenty-three years, my surprise never wore off. The natural features of the country itself, its seasons, its productions, its institutions, its people, were new at the start, and gave fresh surprises to the last. The life was so peculiar and so intense that a new-comer was quickly naturalized if he could only speak any sort of English. Many sorts of English were spoken, from the best to the worst. The precise and pedantic English of the educated New Englander, and the nasal drawl and verbal sinuosities and queer provincialisms of the unlettered or partially educated New Englander; the elegant diction of the most cultured Southerner, the ludicrous imitations of a class of pretenders who aped them, and the marvelous grammatical twists and mirth-provoking phases of the illiterate man from the South; the rugged and picturesque dialect of the Westerner who had lived close to nature and whose ideas and vocabulary were well matched in directness and vividness of coloring; the educated Irishman who spoke the best English, and the uneducated Irishman who spoke the funniest and most original; the educated Englishman who had every word in its place rightly pronounced, and the Englishman to whom the eighth letter of the alphabet was a perpetual puzzle in its relation to vowel sounds; the German, Frenchman, Dutchman, Italian, Spaniard, Scandinavian, Russian, and all the rest, whose English, varying in quantity and quality, revealed their nativity and indicated how long they had been

under our stars and stripes. Bishop Pierce hit it when he said, "California is a jumble." It was a strange mixture—a little of all the world in contact, but not in cohesion. There was constant effervescence and startling explosions among these Californians gathered from everywhere, and with so many different ways of thinking, speaking, and doing. There was a charm about it that never was lost—the charm of novelty. Individuality was marked. Conventionality had been left behind. The Californian was, to an extent scarcely conceivable in older communities, a law unto himself—and herself, I might add, for the early California women, though fewer in number, were not less notable than the men for their originality. Some of them, thrown on their own resources, developed astonishing energy and capacity for self-support on right womanly lines; others exhibited aptitude for badness and descended hellward with a velocity that was awful. When a woman does start down, down she goes! Everybody expects it, and very many are ready to facilitate her descent. The best women are better than the best men, speaking in a general way. The worst women, if not really worse than the worst men, are more hopeless. Hopelessness makes recklessness. God pity the man or woman who helps to shut all the doors of hope against any sinning, suffering soul!

The tragedies that came to my knowledge in California prove that there is a personal devil, or that there are malign agencies that bring to pass all the evil ascribed to Satan in the Holy Scriptures. A personal devil—why did God permit him to come into being? Why does not God kill him? These questions, asked alike by the little child in its simplicity and by the thought-weary philosopher in his despair, have had many answers—some impious

and flippant, some reckless and despairing. We do know that the evil is here. We do know that an evil effect must have an evil cause. And so we are driven by the logic of facts to accept the saying of Jesus: *An enemy hath done this.* There is no use in caviling and quibbling. Moral freedom is a fact. Moral freedom abused brings suffering here in this world where we can see and feel it. When the pitying Christ himself tells us that, persisted in, evil volition will carry its curse into the next world beyond, why should we doubt? Universalism makes an ingenious appeal to sentiment, but the text of the Book and the obvious trend of all that is in sight now are against it. Is this a digression? Not much. A glance at the worst of this life suggests a query concerning the possibilities beyond. If I am digressing, I will digress a little farther, by quoting for the reader the words: *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* Now we can be saved. This ought to satisfy us now. Fuller light hereafter is part of the salvation promised. We can wait for it thankfully and patiently.

It was surprising to find that almost everything in California was in dispute. A lawsuit or a shooting scrape was had over almost every mining claim or land grant. The hottest election campaigns in the older states were but child's play in comparison with such contests in early California. (Everybody else in America save an old Californian will be excused for doubting this.) Oratory, treating, "still-hunting," mass meetings, street processions, personal encounters in newspaper controversy and with fists, knives, and pistols, made running for office a lively experience in those early days of California. The almost incredible bullying and terrorism of the San Francisco roughs surprised

and for awhile paralyzed the city. The uprising and vengeance of the Vigilance Committee astonished, electrified all concerned. The gold fever somehow gave a feverish diathesis to everything in California. That fever burns on yet. The red-hot California of 1855 is a slowly cooling but not cold cinder in 1898. The ashes smolder in many hearts that were then swept by the fires of passion, that never burned more fiercely this side of perdition.

The truly good were also surprisingly good in the California of that time. Negative goodness was good for nothing then and there. The timid fled, the half-hearted went back and walked no more with their Lord. If there was a weak spot in any professed Christian's belief, it was revealed; if there was a flaw in his character, it broke down at that point. Early California was strewn thick with moral wrecks. But those who were true were the truest of the true disciples of Jesus. Those who stood those fires heated seven-fold came forth refined of dross and shining in the beauty of holiness. Never for a day was I out of sight and touch with some of these faithful ones. There was Drury K. Bond, a miner at Sonora, whose sunny, friendly face reflected a soul as guileless as a child's; who moved amid the fires of sin that raged around him, unscorched; whose look, tone, and everyday walk were so Christlike as to disarm the criticism of the most cynical and skeptical, and fortify the faith of all who had faith. He became a preacher, spent a few years in the work of the ministry, doing good in a quiet, blessed way all his own—and then went home to God. There were other miners like him in the California mines in that early time, lights shining in dark places. Then there was Judge David O. Shattuck, of San Francisco—

that surprising compound of legal wisdom, social simplicity, and Methodistic strength and fervor. His apostolic presence bespoke his goodness, a goodness that none could question; his judicial decisions were the terror of tricky lawyers and the joy of the common people; his sermons—he was a local preacher—were models of clear exegesis, pointed application, and fatherly tenderness. He was a marvel to all who knew him—wise as a serpent, harmless as a dove, in the sense in which the words were used by the Master in whose steps he walked. Here they come trooping before my mental vision, but here I must close this chapter.

SOME PREACHERS.

SOME PREACHERS.

TO hear Dr Eustace Speer preach was like listening to a music box that played the tunes that were liveliest and sweetest, and left you wishing for more when it ceased. He never toyed with his subject, as the manner of some is. His sermons had no "introductions." With the first sentence he grasped his theme by the proper handle, and held it firmly to the last. Though a very rapid speaker, every word was well chosen and in its right place. The effect of his discourse was cumulative. When he stopped, the hearer had a homiletic picture vivid and symmetrical photographed in memory. The doctrine he preached had the old-time Georgia Methodist quality of straightedgedness. He did not refine, symbolize, or explain away the texts that reveal the God of the Bible as hating sin and loving holiness; he did not joke about hell-fire, as if it were only painted fire; he did not confound the guilt of willful sin against God with the euphemistic phrases now used by many who preach a gospel of progress, so called—but progress backward toward a theology that makes a God of straw and ethics that make one thing about as good as another; the namby-pamby gospel of the babblers who have invented a new terminology for their new religion, which is no religion at all. Dr. Speer could make the foolishness of sin look very foolish indeed. The sophistry of sin he could reveal with logical flashes that went through it like X-rays. His satire burned the proud flesh of the unrenewed and the unrepentant like caustic. His

wit, sparingly used in the pulpit, had a flavor like that of Dr. South, who impaled error on epigrammatic points. He used quotation with rare felicity: his quotations were diamonds set in gold. At Mulberry Street Church in Macon, Ga., one Sunday, in a discourse of exquisite beauty and tenderness, he quoted from "The Pilgrim's Progress" the description of Standfast at the crossing of the Jordan, and he did it in a style so graphic that the impression remains with me undimmed to this moment. His short prayer-meeting talks, expository and hortatory, stirring and brief, were models. I never heard from him a dull sermon, nor attended a dull service led by him. He had the social gift: he seemed to know everybody, and drew everybody to him by sympathetic attraction. And by the true pastoral instinct he found his way to the places where there were sorrow and pain. His presence was gracious and exhilarating, if I may so describe it. About five feet ten inches in height, "raw-boned," rather large-limbed, with uneven features, aquiline nose, and bright brown, expressive eyes, with light-brown hair covering a noble head firmly set on his broad shoulders—a genius in the pulpit, and akin to every soul he met outside of it: this is Dr. Speer as he appears to me after the lapse of the many years that have come and gone since I sat under his ministry—a privilege for which I shall never cease to be thankful.

Dr. Whitefoord Smith was the most popular preacher in Columbia, the capital city of South Carolina, when I first knew him. He was a high-flyer whose wing was steady, and whose eye was fixed on the sun—a gray eagle of the pulpit. His descriptive powers were remarkable: what he saw he made his hearers see. He possessed the enthusiasm that gave his subject possession of himself

for the time being. What he felt his hearers felt: he had the sincerity of conviction and intensity of feeling that made the facts of the gospel and the experiences of religion tremendously true. His hearers caught his enthusiasm, and were borne with him on the high tide of his magnificent pulpit oratory. As a declaimer, he was brilliant and fascinating to all classes of persons. The sweep of his gesture suited the sweep of his rhetoric. It was spread-eagle style, but in no derogatory sense of the word: the king-bird of the air is never mistaken for any other genus. "Let us go to-night, and hear Whitefoord Smith," said the blasé man of the world, who wanted a fresh luxury of some sort; the woman of fashion, who liked to go with the crowd; the student of human nature, who took delight in analyzing the elements of his pulpit power; the schoolboy and schoolgirl, who gloried in pulpit pyrotechnics and poetry; the old-time Methodists, who believed in a judgment day and a New Jerusalem with its golden streets and rainbow arching the great white throne on which sat the King of glory—all these flocked to hear Dr. Smith, and all were profited more or less as well as pleased. The Church was edified under his ministry, for through all his cloth-of-gold pulpit oratory ran the scarlet thread of the doctrine of the cross. He built upon the sure foundation—Christ Jesus, the wisdom of God and the power of God. He reached the masses and drew them, Christward—this pulpit light who soared and shone, a star of the first magnitude in the heavens.

Dr. R. T. Nabors left a memory with us as flawless as a crystal. No one ever heard him preach without falling in love with both the preacher and his gospel. The graciousness of his message was equaled by the grace of its delivery. The frailty

of his body marked him for early translation to the higher sphere whose airs he inhaled in holy communion with his Lord, and lent a pathos to his ministry that none could resist. Your first thought when you saw him enter the pulpit was that there was a man suited to bring us a message from the world of spirits: he was himself more spiritual than earthly, as he stood there before the people—a man not above medium stature, notably gentle and graceful in bearing, his palid face ashine from an inner light, his thin frame clad in faultless black, his features feminine in their fine delicacy, reflecting every changing phase of thought and feeling in his discourse, and withal an aroma of heavenly-mindedness that filled the house of God with its fragrance. He was a living epistle, known and read of all who came within the range of his ministry. A finer touch than mine would be required to describe his preaching. The usual descriptives seem coarse and awkward when applied to Nabors. When he was brought to Nashville and stationed at West End, near Vanderbilt University, one object had in view was to give the students of that institution an object lesson in saintliness—saintliness without sanctimony, saintliness without sentimentality or softness, the saintliness of a manly nature touched and transfigured by the touch of the Master. He was what is called by some a flowery preacher, but only in a good sense. There was in his soul a love of beauty that led to an inevitable efflorescence in his speech. His flowers were never artificial; they had both the bloom and the fragrance of living plants growing in the garden of the Lord. The lilies of the valley graced the garlands he wreathed for the brow of the King; the rose of Sharon with him, as in the Song of Songs, the queen of all. He

was so attuned to the diviner harmonies that his sermons were truth set to music. The crucified, risen, reigning, interceding Christ was his one theme of discourse. The refrain of the Coronation Hymn was the keynote of his preaching: to crown him Lord of all was the aim of his ministry and the inspiration of his eloquence. The venerable chancellor of the university sat enthralled by his genius and uplifted by his touch, while the little children looked and listened with a pleasure and wonder they did not understand, but felt that it was easier for them to love the Christ preached to them by this disciple who lived so close to him and had so much of his spirit.

George Sim, an undersized Englishman of few words, was a gold miner in one of the mining camps of northern California. One night, arrayed in his mining apparel, a red flannel shirt and corduroy breeches, he sat among the hearers in the rear of the little chapel on the hillside. The preacher was filled with the Spirit, and the sermon shot an arrow of conviction to the heart of the grave and taciturn little Englishman. Conviction was speedily followed by conversion, and his conversion by a call to preach. The reader will see that language of certainty is used in this brief narration. He gave every evidence that his conviction was genuine and his conversion clear. One of the surest evidences of his call to preach was in the fact that he could preach. A man who cannot preach is not called to that function, though some good men have seemed to think otherwise. The first time I ever heard him, and every time thereafter, I had a surprise. His sermons, reported *verbatim et literatim*, would have graced any first-class homiletic magazine of our day. There was a finish about them very remarkable: the unity of

the parts, the severe sententiousness of the style, the closeness of the logic—in a word, the polemic vigor and literary beauty of his sermons were extraordinary. I never heard from his lips a discourse which would not have borne the test of the printer's ink. Of how many living preachers could this be truthfully said? His preaching was simplicity and directness in perfection, the undiluted gospel in the fewest words, mostly Anglo-Saxon monosyllables like his text-book, the English Bible, which he quoted with special frequency and felicity. He knew that English Bible: he was saturated with it; its thought had interpenetrated his thought, its spirit had flooded his spirit. He had little gesture of any sort, was sparing in illustration or anecdote, and never uttered a joke in the pulpit. He simply preached the gospel, and nothing but the gospel, in its plainest terms and fewest words—not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. That blessed demonstration attended his ministry from first to last. Souls that were hungry for the word of life were eager to be fed by him—cultured men and women who knew the difference between the simple beauty of the truth that is the highest beauty of the universe and the meretricious beribboning and bespangling of it by bunglers and babblers. "Where did he get all he knows?" was asked by a scholarly man after meeting Sim socially. He seemed to have read more widely than other men with far larger opportunity: the treasures of history, science, art, philosophy, and general literature, in the truest and largest meaning of the word, were at his command. No rubbish cumbered his capacious brain, and the glorious gospel of the grace of God filled all the needs of his soul. He knew it to be clothed with

a power all its own. He felt that power in his own heart, and as preached by him it was felt by many who will be glad forever that they sat under his ministry

Another name comes in here—that of Robert W Bigham, who died at Demorest, Georgia, October 11, 1900. He was my presiding elder in the California mines in 1856. “Bob” Bigham, his old Georgia comrades fondly called him in his younger days. The abbreviation was expressive of the affectionate familiarity that lent its special charm to the inner circles of clerical friendship. He came of good old Georgia stock, and was molded by Georgia Methodism when it was at the height of its militancy and fervor. He was an uneven preacher: at his best his sermons were massive and symmetrical homiletical structures. His greatest failures suggested more than some noisier men ever say in the pulpit. He was a faithful servant of God. He was a true friend. “Fitzgerald,” he said to me one day in his brotherly way, “you have a dangerous gift, the gift of popularity.” His kindly heart may have led him to exaggerate the measure of good will felt for me by those early Californians, but his admonition was timely for any young preacher. He was fearless and guileless. In a contest he never thought of making any concessions where any righteous principle or policy was involved, and was incapable of evasion. He was the soul of Christian chivalry in the truest, loftiest sense of the word. Our paths parted. I am glad that I knew him.

FIVE FATHERS OF GEORGIA METHODISM.

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THE Indian fighter, the hunter, and the circuit rider were taking possession of the land. The rifle, the ax, and the saddlebags held sway. Daniel Boone and Francis Asbury typed the manhood of the time. The men then called of God to preach were men who feared not any face of clay. Only men of strongest mold and fearless soul could have gotten a hearing. The weakly bookish and otherwise weakly pulpit peddler of theological Perhapes, such as are now seen and heard in some places, would then have been ignored or laughed at. The people had no time to waste on idle or merely curious speculations. They gave a hearing only to men who brought them an earnest message in the present tense. Those old Georgia preachers were converted sinners who knew how to preach to sinners. They believed in total depravity and full salvation; many of them claimed that they knew both experimentally. These preachers were the product of their times by the grace of God. We shall not look upon their like again. Men as great and as good may appear when they are wanted, but they will be men of a different type. Their chief characteristic was robustness. Georgia Methodism as it is now is their work. The names mentioned in this chapter represent their generation. These men—Samuel Anthony, James E. Evans, William J. Parks, John W. Glenn, and William Arnold—will sit for the picture, in the background of which are the thousands they led, the Georgia Methodism which is so largely the fruit of their labors.

Samuel Anthony was my pastor at the old Mulberry Street Church in Macon when I first knew him. The mention of his name brings up memories that are vivid and sacred. In no other man have I ever seen such a blending of sternness and tenderness. While denouncing worldliness in the Church or threatening impenitent sinners with the wrath of a sin-hating God, his tall form seemed to rise to a loftier stature, and his voice rang out like the peal of a super-terrestrial trumpet. The hearer felt that he was listening to judgment-day thunder, and could almost see the flash of its lightnings. In exhortation with hard-hearted sinners, and in pleading with backsliders to come back to the path of duty from which they had strayed, there was an awfulness in his pathos that cannot be put on paper. "It has been said that only a mother knows the heart of a mother," he said one day while making one of these appeals. "Only a mother knows the heart of a mother, and only a pastor knows the heart of a pastor"—and his frame quivered with irrepressible emotion as he spoke. There was a quaking and melting that day in the great congregation. The man of God felt the pangs of soul-travail, and a mighty revival came to the birth. He was a true pastor who watched for souls as one that must give account. Was he eloquent? He was more than eloquent: he was surcharged with a power that went beyond any describable effects of tone or gesture in human speech. When the pulpit glow was on his strong, rugged face, it shone like the sunlit face of a granite cliff. In his impassioned appeals the tones of his voice mellowed into sweetness and fell into the rhythmical flow that seems to be the natural expression of human thought and emotion when at full tide. Six feet and three or four inches in

height, long-limbed and large-boned, with uneven features and particularly high cheek bones, deep-set blue eyes under heavy, dark eyebrows, with a complexion that spoke of fresh air and temperate living—this is the man as he now comes up before my mind. I humbly thank God that I ever met him and sat under his ministry.

John W. Glenn was my first presiding elder. He was a presiding elder who presided; he was a leader who led. He was a rugged sage who saw men and things in the dry light of real facts, and who acted upon the facts as he saw them with almost mathematical certainty. He knew nothing of evasion or irresolution. There were to him only two sides to any question—the right side and the wrong side. He marshaled his Church forces like a true general who knew what ought to be done, and calculated to a fraction the resources at his command. He planned wisely, and then moved boldly—as Von Moltke phrased it, “he pondered well, and then dared.” The Church moved forward under his leadership. The stragglers were disciplined and made to keep step, or were drummed out of camp. He was a true disciplinarian: that is to say, he knew the law of the Church by heart, and enforced it to the letter. The paternal element was conjoined with the autocratic in his make-up. To me, a young preacher with everything to learn, he was patient and faithful in his dealing. His outburst of opposition to my going to California almost electrified me. It is plain enough to me now that he saw farther and more clearly than some others who then had the ear of the Church. As a preacher the substance of his message was: Obey the gospel, do your duty now as God commands, and receive his blessing; disobey or delay at the peril of your soul.

He spoke as one having authority, as the accredited minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, called, commissioned, and equipped for the work committed unto him. The pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hand. He never took a backward step as a leader. He never cheapened the terms of membership in the Church to accommodate or conciliate the half-hearted. He did not use sedatives where caustic was needed in dealing with diseased members of the ecclesiastical body. His faithful ministry resulted in the awakening and reclamation of many souls, while it conserved the purity and power of the Church. Standing on his sturdy limbs, robust of frame, with a leonine head massive and bushy-haired, with a face whose features expressed transparent honesty and courageous forcefulness, the figure of John W. Glenn will hold its place among the men who led Georgia Methodism in the days of its highest militancy.

James E. Evans was the weeping prophet in his day; a man who could preach and sing and pray with an intensity of feeling and a sustained energy that were little short of the miraculous. The dominant note of his preaching was its fervidness. His soul was on fire, and he kindled a holy conflagration wherever he went. Charles Wesley's hymns as sung by him seemed to catch an added glow and a more thrilling power. He could preach three sermons a day, lead the singing at every service, exhort mightily, and make intercessory prayers that seemed to lift penitent souls for whom he prayed into the very arms of the pitying Christ. Those sermons, exhortations, songs, and prayers are echoing in living hearts to-day; they set in motion tides of gracious influence that will break upon the shore of eternity. He was a marked exception to the rule that the revivalist and the

Church financier are not to be looked for in the same person. He had a double vocation as preacher, church-builder, and debt-raiser. His great physical stature, his personal magnetism, the melody of his voice, and his versatility in social gifts marked him for leadership in the Church. He was a faithful steward of the manifold grace of God. His tread was that of a giant. Georgia Methodism will bear the impress of his genius as long as the waters of the Ocmulgee sing their way to the sea.

The one word that comes to my pen point in describing William J. Parks is "aggressiveness." He pushed to his logical conclusions over all sophistries and suppressions. He pushed his way to desired results over all opposers. He was the autocrat of debate: the most eloquent orators and the most subtle special pleaders went down before the onset of this man, who always seemed to know all the facts involved in a discussion and to be able to set them forth in the fewest and most forcible words. There was no confusion in his thought, no waste in his verbiage. He was in himself a Conference majority in most cases by the mere force of his parliamentary genius. In a legislative body where he could have found full play for his powers he would have ranked with the first men of his time. He was as an oracle for wisdom among his compeers, and had a permanent following among the masses accorded only to men who are born to lead. His sermons were like shots from a rifled gun before which nothing could stand. He could impale an error or expose a fallacy in a single sentence that struck to the heart and stuck to the memory. He was deliberation personified. His sayings were quoted far and wide; "Uncle" Billy Parks, as the people fondly

called him, thus furnished ammunition for multitudes of Methodists in their polemic warfare, and in their conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil. His character and his work are as solid and enduring as the strength-girded Stone Mountain upon which the storms have beaten from century to century and left no scar.

William Arnold was unique among his contemporaries. He stood alone as the delineator of the lives of the saints and painter of the glories of heaven. Far and near he was sent for to preach funeral sermons for the old and the young, the rich and the poor alike. With his long white hair, serene, ruddy face, soul-lit blue eyes, and apostolic presence, he seemed to belong to the spiritual world of which it was his delight to preach to the rapt and tearful multitudes that sat under his ministry. To look upon him and hear him made it easy to believe in the truths he proclaimed and to love the Christ whose image he bore. He was a living demonstration of the power of the gospel to lift men above the plane of nature—a walking embodiment of that spiritually-mindedness which is life and peace. When he stood in the pulpit, with his silver locks falling around his temples, his rapt face aglow with the holy flame that burned within his soul, it seemed to the lookers-on that in him the two worlds met. Death, the resurrection, and the joys of the redeemed were his themes—especially the joys of the glorified saints. The best hymns that bore on these subjects he quoted with wonderful fluency and appositeness: many of his funeral sermons were hymnological mosaics, sparkling in more than poetic beauty. The popular impression was that he improvised much of the verse he uttered: it came from his heart with a spontaneity and unctuousness that seemed like inspiration rather than

memory. The listening saints fell in love with the heaven of which he preached and sang, renewed their vows, and quickened their steps thitherward. The mourners looked up through their tears and took comfort. At times a mighty afflatus would descend upon the man of God and upon the waiting assembly, and preacher and people were swept away upon mighty tides of emotion that could no more be checked than the roll of the ocean at its flood. Nobody wished to check the mighty and solemn joy. It came because the channels were open; they let it flow in unhindered, and praised God for a present salvation and a hope that was full of glory. Uncramped by conventionalities, and unused to repression of opinion or feeling, they could not help shouting. It is almost certain that they did not try to help it. It did not hurt them. Their joy was full, and they gave it vent in their own way. The voices of the white-haired preacher and most of those old shouting Georgia Methodists have long since joined in the halleluiahs of the glorified hosts in the city of God. The echoes will never cease among their spiritual children so long as there is a Methodist home or a Methodist altar in Georgia.

THE OLD PANEL.

THE OLD PANEL.

THEY were of the race of the Colossi—those bishops of the old panel of Southern Methodists. There was not a runt nor a weakling among them. They differed one from another as widely as good men could differ. They were not all equally great, but each was a genius in his own way. Men as great as they, and even greater than some of them, failing nowhere save in elections to connectional office, lived obscure lives in narrower spheres of service, and had no memorial other than the obituary department of the Church paper and the mortuary register of the Annual Conference. They did not live for fame; their record is on high—and that is all they sought. But we have found ourselves asking, What would have been the record of certain gifted men who were talked of and voted for for the episcopacy, had they not died without it? Who knows? Mere officeholding is not fame. To the incompetent and unworthy, both in Church and State, it has been a pillory rather than a pedestal.

Joshua Soule stood at the head of the old panel of bishops in more senses than one. He was a Southern Methodist from Maine. With half a chance, those big-framed men from Maine made excellent Southerners. There was a tonic quality in its great forests of pine and in its coast breezes that gave a bulk, firmness, and fineness to its manhood that found responsiveness in the large-framed, liberal-minded, high-mettled Southerners of the best class. Blaine's personal popularity in the South was very great; and when he made an anti-climax

of his public career, the South was a chief mourner at his political grave. That other man from Maine, Speaker Reed—Tom Reed, “the Czar,” in newspaper lingo—was a social lion among Southerners in Washington City. These men were weighty, warm-blooded, human—not lucky in politics, but with a personal following like that of Clay or Jackson. When Joshua Soule refused ordination on what many men would have called a mere punctilio, but what was to him a point of honor, he showed the metal of which he was made. He was wrought steel, double-refined in the fiery trials that somehow come in some form to every man who does anything worth doing in this world. He left nothing behind him worth mentioning in the line of written or printed thought. He was not a writer, nor a dreamer, nor a theorizer. He was a Methodist preacher who stuck to his vocation, and an administrator who administered according to the Methodist discipline, with an eye single to duty as prescribed by the law of the Church and the Head of the Church. But though he left behind him no “literary remains,” he did bequeath to the Church a legacy rich beyond computation—a life without spot or blemish, or any such thing; an example of subordination of self to duty in the present tense, imperative mood; a nobility of Christian manhood that stood every test. He set the fashion, so to speak, in his great office. His life is worth more to his Church than a library filled with books that deal with Christian duty and ethics as abstractions. Any man, in the succession to Bishop Soule, who should prove to be self-seeking, cowardly, or small-minded, would furnish a demonstration of invincible natural depravity and sinister heredity. Bishop Soule looked the man he was: tall and stately, with the gravity of a thinker;

virile, incisive, reverend, serene, with that impression of reserved force peculiar to the grand men who possess it; a man among men, and a mighty man of God.

When the famous race horse, "Bascom," was announced as the winner on the race track at Lexington, Ky., a gigantic Kentuckian, amid the cheering of the crowd, exclaimed, "Hurrah for Bascom! I'll bet ten thousand dollars that the man that colt was named for can beat any other man preaching in these United States." He found no takers in that crowd. The great preacher was at the top of his fame, the man of the hour as a pulpit orator. That is what remains of Bascom—the tradition of wonderful oratory. "Bascom cannot be described," said Bishop Kavanaugh; "he was simply overwhelming. There was a majesty of bearing, a rush of imagery, a vehemence of manner, a flow of emotion that could not be analyzed or described. I loved him," continued his lovable and much-loved successor, "for he was as absolutely guileless and tender of heart as he was transcendent in his intellectual endowment." Bascom's printed sermons were a disappointment. The Bascom who thrilled with his wonderful oratory the crowds who thronged to hear him at our national capital—whose name was the synonym for eloquence everywhere among his countrymen, drawing the largest congregations and eliciting the largest share of contemporaneous admiration and applause—is looked for in vain in these printed sermons. For the most part they are magniloquent, turgid, and rickety in structure: here and there they have a touch so giant-like in its swing and power that the reader recognizes the production of genius, though it is genius unharnessed and half asleep. He was undoubtedly a

very great preacher; and not only the tradition of his wonderful oratory, but the fruit of it, abides. He was a man of sorrows. He stands before the Church like a mountain peak overtopping the surrounding hills, its sides draped in the mist, cloud-capped, the light breaking through the gloom at the sunset.

The one word that describes Bishop James O. Andrew is the word "fatherly"—the sort of fatherliness that implies not only benignity, but strength, wisdom, forethought, patience. He was a vicarious sufferer, the storm-center of a tempestuous epoch in the history of the Church. It so happened that this most fatherly man gave occasion for the clash that was bound to come because it was bargained for in antecedent legislation both in Church and State, and was involved in the conjunction of conditions that precipitated the long-dreaded yet inevitable catastrophe. He was strong enough and true enough for the crisis. Pushed to the front of the line of battle, he had at his back all the forces of his section. It was a sectional fight: the old régime and the letter of the constitution were on the side of the South, and the drift of events and the spirit of the age were with the North. The split in the Methodist Episcopal Church was only a symptom of a disease, the germs of which were injected into the body politic by the framers of our government. The first gun in our civil war was fired at Philadelphia in 1789, and the last at Appomattox in 1865. Yes, the last: whatever may be the destiny awaiting this nation in the unknown future, it will be met by us as a united people. During all those years of strife, neither weakness nor acrimony was ever exhibited by Bishop Andrew: through it all he bore himself with dignity and patience. His face bore the marks of inward

struggle, but he gave no outward sign of the secret griefs that he carried only to the Lord who was his sun and shield. Full-grown and stalwart, forcefulness and friendliness beaming from his strong, open face, his thin gray locks falling on either side of his noble head, he stands in his lot in Church history, a father in Israel who will hold his place in the veneration and affection of our people so long as they maintain the principles of truth and righteousness for which he was a champion and in some sense a martyr.

Standing in close relation to Bishop Andrew, historically and otherwise, is Bishop Robert Paine. Born in North Carolina, trained for his work in Alabama, matured and developed in Mississippi, and mellowed and sweetened in his wide sphere of connectional service and in the school of suffering, he did a work for the Church whose value cannot be computed this side of the judgment day. He was a Southern gentleman of the old school, a Christian of the type that built up what is best in our civilization, a servant of the Church who was faithful to every trust and equal to the heavy responsibilities devolved upon him by the suffrages of his brethren. To have known him was to possess a prophylactic against misanthropy or pessimistic views as to the ultimate possibilities of human nature. As president of a Christian college the quality of Christian manhood revealed to his pupils in his daily intercourse with them what lies beyond all text-book pedagogy: the possibility of such an imitation of Christ as kindled within them the loftiest aspiration and spurred them to the most strenuous endeavor. The only thing of essential importance concerning any man, young or old, is just this: the quality of his manhood. The traditions of Bishop Paine at Lagrange Col-

lege remain among us to this day; and the life of this land of ours is purer and sweeter because of the fact that by word and deed this Christian gentleman and scholar put his impress upon the souls of his students. Bishop Paine was one of the men whose very excellences might disparage him in the judgment of the superficial. He was so rounded in character and in his intellectual make-up that the wonder-hunters looked elsewhere for material to satisfy their morbid cravings. The erratic genius who is one half crank and the other half a nondescript mixture will make more noise and oftener get his name into men's mouths and the newspapers, but when he dies nothing more is left of him than of the meteors that stream across the November heavens at night. Men like Bishop Paine shine on like the fixed stars. During his lifetime he was not accredited with a great number of great sermons—sermons of “phenomenal brilliancy, profundity, and power,” using the stereotyped phraseology—but his pulpit work was uniformly so lofty that excellence was assumed as a matter of course. As a bishop, he formed correct judgments of men and things and did what was right and wise so habitually that it was only after he was disabled from further service that the Church began to realize his worth. This man of gentle blood, upon whose fine natural stock was ingrafted the diviner element of the Christ-life, subsided first into graceful superannuation, and then went up to be forever with the Lord whom he followed so long with loving heart and steady steps.

Bishop John Early was of the virile old Virginia clan of that name, a clan whose spinality stands all tests. General Jubal Early was one of these: he who refused to sign the ordinance of secession

when Virginia went out of the Union, and also refused to surrender when the Southern Confederacy furled its banner at Appomattox. They are a self-directing, aggressive, persistent race, hard to turn when once started on a chosen line of action. To such men neutrality is incomprehensible where anything is at stake worth fighting for, and retreat or surrender unthinkable while there is one round of ammunition left. All the diplomacy Bishop Early knew and practiced was the diplomacy of the imperative mood on the basis of existing facts. As a pastor, he saw what his parishioners ought to do and led them to do it. As a presiding elder, he planned campaigns of church-building and soul-saving and executed them with a celerity and vigor that made the dawdling and timid dizzy. As a connectional Book Agent, he exhibited the same business qualities. As a preacher, he was simply John Early: there was none exactly like him, and he left no successor. He had a mighty faith in God. He was a phenomenal revivalist. The saints rallied to his call, and sinners capitulated. He had his own way of doing things. "Touch her if you dare!" he said to an irate youth who essayed to force his sister from the altar where she was kneeling with others during one of his revival meetings. The youth did not dare: the tone and gesture of the militant elder caused a sudden change of purpose. The tender side of Bishop Early never left him: he was brother, father, friend, helper wherever brotherliness, friendship, and helpfulness were needed. When there was a fight on hand he was not dodging in the rear, but at the front shooting bullets; but he never fired under the white flag nor struck an unfair blow. He lived to be an old man, and was weary toward the end. When his discharge came he was glad.

George F. Pierce, a pulpit monarch and master of the platform, a genius without eccentricity; Hubbard H. Kavanaugh, whose eloquence was a demonstration of the supernatural element that is imparted to human thought and speech, according to the promise of the Lord, whose humor and gentleness flooded with sunshine all the circles he touched in his long and illustrious career; Holland N. McTyeire, "a leader of men and a lover of little children," whose greatness will grow with the coming years that will more and more reveal the far-reaching wisdom of his plans, the mightiness of his stroke, and the singleness of his aim; David S. Doggett, "the golden-mouthed"; Enoch Marvin, the Missourian, whose career shows how the divine touch transfigures whomsoever receives it, who stirred the hearts of the multitudes that hung upon his lips as he preached a full gospel from a soul fully baptized with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; William Capers, the apostle of negro evangelization in the South, a man who in the social circle and everywhere exhibited the polish of genuine culture, and in the pulpit flamed with the true pentecostal glory; Linus Parker, whose life was an evangelical poem, who wrote editorials noted alike for classic beauty and spiritual insight, whose sermons were flawless homiletic crystals—all these belonged to the old panel, but as I have made larger mention of them elsewhere, this glance will suffice here.

A MIDWINTER MEDITATION.

A MIDWINTER MEDITATION.

STEADY, steady! To-day, January 23, 1900, the suggestion comes to me that the work of my life is done. The questions that arise in my mind are searching, the feelings aroused are unspeakably solemn. The work of my life—what has been its prime motive and inspiration? Have I built upon the true foundation? The words of the apostle Paul in the third chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians speak to my inner ear: “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.”

Steady! We all know that the last stroke must come some day. But to me this has hitherto always seemed a far-off possibility. I sit and face the issue, knowing that here is a blessing for me if I have faith to grasp it.

Steady! The richest blessing that can come to me is to make God’s will my will in all things at all times. The habitudes of my life have been such as to make this test a test indeed.

Softly! The blessing is here. The thought comes to me to-day, not for the first time, that by the gracious law of compensation that seems to run through all the divine administration as far as we can trace its operation, the very excess of pain blunts its edge; the very extremity of weakness

tempers the consciousness of it. Thus thinking, I open a book lying on my table—"The Pilgrim's Progress"—and read John Bunyan's account of Mr. Standfast's crossing the Jordan at a time "when there was a great calm in the river"—and it seems to me that if I should be called to go over to-day there would be no storm upon its banks. Thy will be done, O God! The foundation standeth sure.

A LITTLE NOTE.

I WAS tempted by my love of the men, and from force of habit long indulged, to give in these pages a brief sketch of each and all of my colleagues in the Board of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. But I forbear—saying only this word from the depths of my heart: The longer and more fully I have known them—each and all—the more absolute has been my confidence in them and love for them. Their brotherly kindness to me has been unvarying and unstinted.

O. P. FITZGERALD.

PART II.



THE PLATFORM.

DREAMS.

“All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard:
Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by and by.”
—*Browning*.

DREAMS.

[From a Commencement Address to Young Ladies.]

YOU expect from me to-day, young ladies of the graduating class, much sober counsel, full of wisdom—original or second-hand. It is difficult on such an occasion as this, with such surroundings, to avoid being oracular, or to withhold cheap advice and gushing platitudes. But I suspect your thought is, that you have had enough of the sober realities of life for some time past. And I am sure that you will meet enough of inevitable realities in the course of your lives, bringing you to that knowledge of many things and of yourselves that can come only in one way—by experience. Realities! What are realities? The answer would lead us out of our course and into water too deep for our soundings. This is an occasion rather for relaxation, for congratulation, for joyful outlook, and for happy daydreams. Ah, if I could read all the daydreams that are floating through your minds at this moment, and then translate them to this audience, this would indeed be a lively hour

The dream world, after all, is in some sense the real world. In it we are near the heart of things and farthest from the sphere of conventionalities and shams. In the morning of the world God made revelations of highest truth to men in dreams. The ladder Jacob saw reaching up into the shining depths of heaven was seen in a dream: when he awoke he saw only the enveloping night and the silent stars overhead. In that oldest and wonderful

sacred drama, the Book of Job, Elihu tells of revelations made to him from the spirit-world "in the thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men." That weird and witching master of the English tongue, Thomas De Quincey, has a passage in his "Confessions of an English Opium-eater"—memorized by me while lying on my back under the manzinata bushes on a mountain-top above the beautiful Napa Valley, in California, many years ago: "The machinery for dreaming planted in the human brain was not planted for nothing. That faculty, in alliance with the mystery of darkness, is the one great tube through which man communicates with the shadowy. And the dreaming organ, in connection with the heart, the eye, and the ear, compose the magnificent apparatus which forces the infinite into the chambers of the human brain, and throws dark reflections from eternities below all life upon the mirrors of the sleeping mind." He might as truly have said that in dreams bright reflections from eternities above all sensuous life are thrown upon the mirrors of the sleeping mind. De Quincey was an opium-eater, and was haunted by horrors that even his marvelous genius could not adequately describe. Here is the deep truth already hinted at, namely: That the dream world is a real world. Your dreams are reflections both of your physical and spiritual nature. Some dreams mean nothing more than too much supper—or too little, as the case may be. A harmless but extra beefsteak is in a dream transformed into a ravening or hideous demon: that additional saucer of ice cream becomes in your dream a Stygian river flowing through realms infernal. Hungry persons dream of eating: the thirsty in their dreams quaff from sparkling streams. Even on this lower side of our

nature hygienic hints, reproofs, and warnings are given us in dreams.

We proceed a step farther, and affirm that dreams have a moral quality. Unmoored in sleep, with the hand of the will removed from the rudder of the conscious soul, it drifts into its own proper current. It would perhaps be too much to say that any evil act perpetrated in a dream would be possible to the sleeper when awake. Morbid physical conditions superinduce morbid mental and moral states. The religion of the body, as we all know, has much to do with the religion of the soul. You cannot dwarf, enfeeble, or debase the one without dwarfing, enfeebling, and debasing the other. The soul and body are companions for this life, and after awhile they will be reunited for immortal companionship. They react on each other, and rise and fall together. There are truths along this line that would make the silliest girl living do at least a few minutes' thinking if they once happened to strike her mind. I venture to say just here, that when a person's dreams habitually drift into wrong channels, the fact may be taken as a sign that the current of that person's waking life is flowing in a wrong direction. The thought, the desire, held in check and counteracted by various influences during the waking hours, in dreams follow the direction of their actual inclination. So it may happen that the soul that seems to be pure and sweet amid virtuous and refining associations in the daytime, in dreams during the still and holy hours of night may be rioting in scenes of impurity and raging with evil passion. It may also come to pass that the soul of a true Christian in dreams of the night might be invaded by the specters of sin because of hereditary bias, previous indulgence of evil habit, or

possibly demoniac suggestion. Even the holy Bishop Ken, in his beautiful "Midnight Hymn," which has soothed so many restless pillows, and distilled its serene and adoring spirit into so many responsive hearts, prayed:

All loose, all idle thoughts cast out,
And make my very dreams devout.

It may be that you never had occasion to make this prayer, but should loose and idle thoughts come to you in dreams, it will be well for you to ask yourself what relation they bear to the thoughts you cherish and the deeds you do when awake.

We proceed yet a step farther, and tread softly, feeling that we are upon holy ground. There are dreams that come directly from God. This is a solemn mystery, and also a solemn truth. I do not say, nor do I believe, that in these days by dreams any new revelation is made of the principles of divine truth, or of any facts supplementary to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The completed canon of Holy Scripture and the living Church with its ordinances and appointments are enough, with the guiding, illuminating, interpreting of the Holy Ghost, to enlighten, uplift, and save the world. We are not to expect any supplementary New Testaments, because we do not need them. They would be given if they were needed. The Church is equal to its mighty mission. God has built, equipped, and provisioned the ship for the voyage. She has sailed, and is still sailing, stormy seas under darkened skies; she has a true chart and compass, and the Master is on board. She will make the port. But while there is no need of further objective revelation of Christian truth, every receptive soul has continual revelations of subjective truth by the Holy Spirit. Daily,

hourly, instantly, the receptive soul is touched, illuminated, strengthened, uplifted, and upheld by the Spirit of God. This we all believe—yea, some of us do, and all may joyfully know.

It is said to be a well-established fact in science that the living brain never rests. The fact of unconscious cerebration is universally conceded, and some of the phenomena attending it make the most interesting chapters in psychological studies. Can we believe that the Holy Spirit is barred from access to the human soul when wrapped in slumber? God's chosen ones—Jacob, Joseph, Daniel, in the Old Testament, and Joseph and Mary, and Peter and Paul, in the New Testament—were dreamers; and a great company of devout and finely-tuned souls all along the ages have had dreams that meant much to themselves, if not to others. The belief that every human being has a guardian angel that never fails in its loving watch, is held by many, and is not without some support from the Holy Scriptures. It is a more solemn and inspiring thought that nightly slumbers are sentineled by the Holy Spirit that like the viewless wind comes in the still, small voice as well as in the rushing, mighty whirlwind. Like a photographic plate ready for the touch of the sunbeam, she who sinks into sleep in the companionship of pure thoughts and holy affections and divine aspirations is prepared for the touch of the Eternal Sun that shineth in the darkness as in the light, whose beams flood the spiritual universe with the glory of God. Whoso hath once felt the divine touch in a dream of the night will never forget it. It is an experience that makes forever sacred the quiet, blessed world, and adds another degree in the schooling of the elect soul that is learning heavenly secrets in the school of God. We walk here

with sandaled feet. William Cullen Bryant's exquisite poem, "The Land of Dreams," almost quotes itself as he sings of that mighty realm "with steps that hang in the twilight sky," over "whose shadowy borders flow sweet rays from the world of endless morn."

That was a hard thing required of Daniel the prophet by the king whose dream had passed from him, and yet left him troubled in spirit: he must tell the dream, and then give its interpretation. By divine inspiration the man of God did the wonderful thing required of him. Though I cannot claim Daniel's inspiration, I have read the Book of God and dreamed my own dreams and seen life in many phases in many places. What are your dreams to-day? You cannot help dreaming of the future; you were created for immortality and never-ending progress. Who can tell the thoughts of a young maiden standing where you do now? Love and duty, pleasure and service, earth and heaven, are mingled in your thoughts this day. The glintings of the figures in a kaleidoscope, the changes of a summer sunset sky, but faintly illustrate the quick-coming and quick-going fancies of a young soul in the blossoming season of life. Your horizon is wide and indefinite—and therein is its fascination. Vastness and mystery make the charm of the ocean. I have stood on the shore of the mighty Pacific on the long stretch of white beach just beyond the Golden Gate, and watched the great breakers as they came rolling in, and felt in my soul that strange thrill and sense of unlimited power that accompany the touch of Nature in her mightiest manifestations. As I thus stood and gazed upon the sea, that best symbol of infinity, my soul was flooded with that sense of the Infinite which is the most exalted mood of the im-

mortal mind. This vastness and this mystery make the charm of your daydreams now. Your horizon is boundless. The universe and its all-glorious Author; time, with its changes and chances; eternity, with its ever-widening prospect, and ever-enlarging vision; the pleasure of fresh acquisitions of knowledge in fields that are illimitable—these are the subjects of daydreams that float in airy splendor through young minds like yours that have been trained to the contemplation of the attributes and works of the Infinite God. The sweetness and glory of this vision are yours forever, if you will have it so. The deepest sense of joy in the revelation of truth to the mind and of love to the heart is in the assurance that there is an inexhaustible fullness of both in reservation for all faithful souls. *I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness*, was the declaration of a sacred singer who in his dream of blessedness had swept through the gate of the eternal city and caught the choral songs of the angels of God and their triumphant doxologies to the King of glory. He would be satisfied, when he awaked, to find that his dreams of perfection were turned into actualities; he would be satisfied because he would then enter upon a state of existence freed from the disabilities and limitations of earth, clothed upon with immortality.

In the dream world we now find the analogue and prophecy of the sublime realities of the life to come. That remarkable thinker, Isaac Taylor, in his "Physical Theory of Another Life," speculated as to the nature and powers of the resurrection body. He says it may be as tenuous as the veil of the aurora, or it may be as dense as the finest gold, but it will be clothed with tremendous power. Its flight will be swift enough to overtake the swiftest planet in its orbit. It is said that electricity

moves at the rate of two hundred and eighty thousand miles in a second: the rate of travel is faster in a dream. The unfettered movement of the spiritual body will transcend the known realities of science and the marvels of the world of dreams. Simple volition may be sufficient to carry it from world to world. Paul, while lying stunned on the commons of Lystra, had time to pass through the first and second into the third heaven, and got such a glimpse of its wonders and glories as it was unlawful for him to disclose in the imperfect language of earth. After such a flight as that, it is no marvel that his heart was calm and his nerves steady when driven before Euroclydon in stormy Adria. Nor is it strange that when the time drew nigh when he was to pass through the gate of martyrdom to sweep again past shining worlds and constellations to the heaven of which he had caught that brief but vivid glimpse, he was filled with a solemn and mighty joy. These dreams in which time and space are so nearly annihilated give us hints of what we shall realize when we awake in the likeness of God. This body is sown in weakness; it will be raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it will be raised a spiritual body.

I know not what awaits each one of you in coming life. I would not lift the veil that hides your future. There will be joy and grief, smiles and tears, orange blossoms and funereal weeds, sunshine and shadow, glad surprises and shocks of sudden calamity. Your life journey leads by a way you know not. It is best you should not know. When you come to the rugged hills, climb them. Enjoy the beautiful landscapes as you pass them. And rest assured that at the end of your journey every good thing that has entered into your aspiration, plan, and purpose will greet you in that world where

hope is changed into fruition, and the longing for perfection shall find its realization. Your highest dreams of spiritual purity, exaltation, and blessedness now are sure prophecies of what you shall be then. What you put into your dream here, God will put into your destiny there.

A MAN WANTED.

TEXT: "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none." (Ezek. xxi. 30.)

A MAN WANTED.

THAT was a remarkable statement which we read in the twenty-second chapter of Ezekiel: "I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; *but I found none.*"

It was a crisis in the nation's history. A man was needed to meet that crisis. None could be found, and the gracious purpose of deliverance was thwarted because of the lack of a suitable human instrument.

Do not be startled at this statement. It is not mine: it is God's own. And, reduced to its last analysis, it simply affirms that God will not override the free agency of man, and that moral results can be secured only by moral agency. It is the old truth, old as the government of God, that men cannot be saved from the consequences of their own volitions without degrading them from the plane of reason and responsibility to that of the brute creation.

God wanted a man of a particular sort for a specific work. Why did he not make a man for the emergency? That is not his way. God never made but one man directly, and that was Adam. Men are made by the operation of God's laws of physical, mental, and moral development. God uses men thus developed, but he never raises up men for special work by any influence or process that ignores or destroys human freedom and accountability.

God wanted a man, and looked for him, but

could not find him. He looked at the priesthood, but there was no one among them whose soul was ready at the divine touch to kindle with prophetic fire. He looked among the soldiers, but among them all could be found not one who had the nerve, brain, and heart of a hero. He looked among the scribes or teachers, but found not one among them all who could go beyond the perfunctory round of heartless instruction, mumbling over the dead letter of truths that once throbbed with heavenly life. He looked among the old men to find a leader whose ripened wisdom was equal to the solution of the vital problems of the time, but found only senility, servility, and the selfishness that shuts out truth and destroys true manhood. He looked among the young men to find a hero, but there was no heroic metal found in that mass of sensuality, greed, and vanity; that crowd of swindlers, robbers, and dudes. The nation was bankrupt in morals and patriotism, and it perished. God's draft on them for a man went to protest. No miracle could save them. Miracles! They are never wrought except in coöperation with suitable human agency. At this time the channels were so obstructed that the only communication possible between God and apostate Israel was the announcement of the nation's impending doom, through the lips of the one man whose soul was true enough to deliver God's message faithfully.

It was surely an evil time. The hedges were broken—that is, lawlessness was rampant; even the forms of law were disregarded; justice was trampled under foot; the worship of God was neglected; the Sabbath profaned; prince, priest, and people were involved in a common guiltiness before God. The barriers between right and wrong were broken down, and the land was

mourning because of evil doers and evil doing. Forsworn officers of the law, official robbers, unfaithful teachers, unholy priests, and lying prophets abounded. A man was wanted to stand in the gap—to restore the supremacy of law, to rescue the holy Sabbath from desecration, to punish criminals, and to protect the innocent.

A man was wanted, not a manikin; not a fraction of a man; not a crank whose gimlet eyes could see only one angle of a single issue; not a wordy theorizer who filled the air with noise and yet did nothing; not a sham reformer whose patriotism was patronage, whose piety was personal profit. A man was wanted to stand in the gap—a man who could not be bought by money or office, a man who could not be seduced by cunning nor intimidated by force; a man who would stand against odds, and stand alone if need be. A man? Where is he? Let us look for him to-day, not in the annals of the dead Israelites who have been hundreds of years in their graves, but among the living of our own time.

We want a man for the pulpit who will stand in the gap against false doctrine and as an administrator of discipline. We want a man, not a mere echo or make-believe. The pulpit needs real men, not sensationalists who would rather excite the astonishment of a crowd than rouse them to repentance, nor the blusterer who is vehement in general denunciation of general wrongdoing, but would not risk the loss of a nickel or the smile of a rascal by grappling with existing evils or crossing the path of a corruptionist.

We want men who will stand up for the doctrines of the Church—not heresy-hunters, but lovers of the truth, and with such a true sense of honor that, when their convictions change and they can no

longer conform to their ordination vows, they will exercise a freeman's right and go elsewhere.

The ethics of the man who, after taking the solemn vow of agreement with the doctrine and discipline of his Church, and promising to preach according to its standards and to enforce its discipline, violates that vow and promise, using the very pulpit committed to him as a battery to destroy what he was placed there to support and defend—the ethics of such a man are below those of a mock-auction house or a gambling hell.

Liberality is a good thing, but let us not mistake indifference to truth and treachery to friends for liberality. Liberality is a good thing when it is genuine, when it is conjoined with earnest conviction, the courage that dares to defend the truth, and the magnanimity that allows every other man the freedom you claim for yourself. But of the so-called liberality that has a welcome for every new folly that swaggers into the arena, and a sneer for all who insist upon old and exalted notions of honor and prefer to walk in the old paths until certain that they can find better ones; of the liberality that is forever beating against the foundations of our faith; of the liberality that offers us nothing in exchange for the truth we love except the dreary negations of doubt and the angry denunciations of the unbelief that has its root in the heart of sin; of the liberality that eats the bread of the Church of Christ while at the same time seeking the plaudits of the shallow-brained and godless rabble who denounce and ridicule it—of that sort of liberality we have had enough. Men are wanted for the pulpit who will stand in the gap against all enemies of truth.

Men are wanted who will stand in the gap and maintain the discipline of the Church. There

are many who see the evil resulting from failure to enforce discipline, and many are speaking out. But who are doing anything? Among our men covetousness, intemperance, speculation, lying, cheating are breaking down the hedges, obliterating the old landmarks of our fathers, while our women are running mad with the vanities of the world. But who ever hears of a case of discipline? Some of our beloved brothers in the pulpit seem to make up for their failure to enforce discipline by the arraignment of individual law-breakers, by more vehement denunciation of sin in general terms from the pulpit. Why, I know of a preacher who has preached enough reform sermons to have started a new reformation during the last two years, and yet has never brought a single individual transgressor of his charge to trial, the world all the time rushing in like a flood and scandals in circles that ought to be holy filling the air with moral malaria. Oh, the casuistry of the devil! It is subtle, it is insinuating, it will invade the pulpit itself. By this pulpit blustering a preacher conceals from himself the fact that he is a fraud in the sight of God. Men are wanted in the pulpit who will stand in these gaps, not holiday soldiers for rhetorical parade and elocutionary fireworks. Men are wanted not simply to notify the public to come every Sunday and hear them declaim against the gigantic evils of the times, but who will stand in the gap in person, and by wholesome example and faithful enforcement of discipline demonstrate that their eloquence is not mere *brutum fulmen*, and that their manhood is genuine manhood. Our country is rich in the possession of some such men: it would be richer if it had more of them.

Men are wanted in newspaper offices to stand in the gap against the evils of these times. Our

editors are themselves teachers, censors, critics, guides to the rest of us. The man and the editor are too often separated. The man is a Christian; the editor runs his paper by antichristian methods. The man, in an editorial, denounces corruption in politics and dishonesty everywhere, while the advertising columns of his paper encourage every fraud and shameful imposition upon credulity, from the pills that infallibly cure all incurable diseases to the mysterious machines that will do everything short of raising the dead, from the sure way of making a fortune by the investment of a dollar to the "blind" advertisement that means on its face nothing but theft. Nobody will defend this sort of thing. But who will arrest the evil? Where is the man who will stand in the gap and raise our journalism to the proper standard? Where is the community that will support a true man in such a reform of journalism?

Men are wanted to stand in the gap against corruption in politics. I shall indulge in no cant concerning politics or politicians. Politics is the science or the art of government. Every American citizen ought to be a politician. The citizen who opposes all political parties, like the religionist who opposes all religious denominations, usually means all except his own. Party organization is a necessity under such a government as ours. Party fealty is a virtue. Parties mean policies, and policies are political economy in the concrete.

When a Christian citizen in this country eschews politics, he offers a premium for bad government. The pie brigade always votes: the pious brigade, what shall it do? Shall Christian men wrap themselves in their robes of self-righteousness and keep out of politics for fear of contamination? Shall they quiet their consciences and acquit themselves

of the obligations of patriotism by whining over the misgovernment they did nothing to prevent and denouncing the rascals whom they by their blamable inaction helped to put in office? The young citizen with a dreamy look and his roached hair, who quotes Latin and Greek and is too dainty to vote, too lofty in his soarings after the infinite to become interested in politics, is the weak tea of the body politic, and the more it is sweetened the worse it tastes. The manhood of the nation is mostly to be found in its great party organizations. The mugwump has his function, and I have nothing to say against him in this connection; but it is easy to see that a nation of mugwumps would be a nation without policies or practical statesmanship. The want of the times is men that are good, not goody—men that will lead in support of definite policies, not theorists nor sentimentalists that do nothing but talk, or whine, or dream, or rhapsodize sweetly when in a good humor and anathematize wildly when they are not.

But suppose your party goes wrong, must you follow it still? Then comes the test of manhood. Then you must stand in the gap, clinging to principles rather than empty names. One true man may save a party from ruin by throwing himself across its path when it goes wrong. Party fealty is a good thing, but it does not require a Christian man to join forces with the barroom element of society, nor to vote for a man he knows to be a scoundrel. I will follow my party as far as a man can go with a clear conscience; but when it would lead me through a whisky saloon, we part company then and there. If politics is a dirty pool, it is because it has been left to the control of the dirty fellows who make it a trade. You have seen the fellow who begins his campaign for an office by denoun-

cing party organization and officeholding. You have also seen the man who, in leading or aiding a genuine reform movement, refused to be an incumbent or a candidate for any office in order that his hands might be unfettered and his motives beyond suspicion.

A man! there he goes limping to his daily toil, with head erect and cheerful mien, an empty sleeve dangling at his side. He fought on the side of his convictions in the civil war, and left part of his corpus on the field of battle. There he goes to his work. He does not whine nor grumble. He gets no pension, but out of his hard earnings he pays his quota to the miraculous Federal pension list, which, in defiance of all precedent and all natural law, grows bigger and bigger as we get farther and farther from the war. There he goes! the crippled Confederate who makes his own living, pays his taxes, and stands erect in the strength of a genuine manhood. Lift your hat to him: he is a man.

A man! there he goes to his recitations, a young man who works his way through college. The silver spoons of the family were melted or stolen during the war, and he was not "born with a silver spoon in his mouth." But he was born with a better heritage: in his heart and brain were the elements of true manhood that will make this Southern land bloom into a prosperity more glorious than ever before.

There he goes! the young man of genius, who deliberately turns away from money-making and the prizes he might win in secular professions and takes the post of difficulty and toil in the work of philanthropy and religion, performing the labor of three men with not half the pay of one, that institutions may be established and endowed to bless

the generations yet to be born. Talk of endowment for our colleges! Their moral endowment has already come in the self-abnegation and heroism expended upon them by the true men, living and dead, who have given themselves, soul and body, and substance, to this work. The money endowment is on the way, and will come when wise money-users become as numerous as money-grabbers and money-worshippers are now.

Men are wanted everywhere—men who are honest in trade; real estate agents who are discriminating in the use of descriptive adjectives; farmers who will put on top an article not above the average in size and quality; dairymen who will sell butter of natural color and milk of natural quality, innocent of spring or pump; druggists whose compounds are true to their labels; millers whose measures are the same for buyer and seller; editors who would rather be scooped than to lie; hotel-keepers whose beds and bills of fare do not mean insomnia, dyspepsia, and extortion; liverymen who know the hour of the day and have one price for all who are able to pay; bankers who will speculate only with the money that belongs to themselves; manufacturers who allow their employees to share in their prosperity; lawyers who apply to their own conduct the principles of equity and the rules of law which they demand in behalf of their clients for a consideration; doctors to whom quackery in every form is as abhorrent in fact as it is in their professions; judges who will hold the scales of justice with even hand though a millionaire be on the one side and a penniless man on the other.

These are the sort of men that are wanted everywhere, to check the tendency toward deterioration in our national life, to repair the breaches that have already been made in our moral defenses, and

to carry our beloved country forward surely and steadily in the path of prosperity, progress, and true national glory.

A man was wanted in Israel to meet the national crisis. Nothing is said here about a woman being wanted. Why? Because the work was unsuited to women—at least to the women of that day. It was rough work that was to be done in troublous times, and the higher the quality of the woman as a woman the less was she suited to it. The best women of Israel at that time were busy otherwise, taking care of the homes where purity and love and reverence still dwelt. Man can no more do woman's work than she can do his work. There are exceptions in both directions, but they should be regarded as exceptions. Man for the field, the forum, and the senate; woman for the home. When no man can be found to meet Sisera in the high places of the field, a Jael may be found with nail and hammer to smite the sleeping warrior. But if I were looking for a woman to put her hand in mine to walk with me through life, I would prefer the hand of one who had smoothed the brow of care, wiped the death-damps from the face of the dying, or curled the locks of childhood in a home brightened and hallowed by her presence and ministries. When the manhood of Israel was so deteriorated that no man could be found with a soul true enough to be a channel of communication with God, and voice his will to the nation, a Huldah or a Deborah was chosen for the emergency; but every Bible reader and student feels that these were exceptional cases, and furnish precedents that will apply to us only when the time comes that God will look for a man among us and find none to stand in the gap. And that dark day will never come to us so long as our homes are blessed with the types

of womanhood that adorn and glorify them now. So long as woman is what she ought to be in the home, manhood will not be lacking for public service. God wants men now for the work that is to be done now.

FINISHED.

“The pathos of all time and life is the contrast between the illimitable thirst and the unsatisfying draught, between the flagging ideal and the lagging real, between the dream and the accomplishment, between aspiration and capacity and power on the one hand, and change, limitation, disease, and death on the other.”

FINISHED.

[A Baccalaureate Talk to Young Women.]

TO-DAY your college course will be finished. Finished! That word has music and inspiration in it. It may be taken as the keynote and motto of this long-expected hour.

There is a peculiar satisfaction in contemplating any well-finished work. The Divine Mind itself, we may believe, enjoys this satisfaction. When on the seventh day the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and God had ended his work which he had made, he rested from all his work, making a sort of holiday, a joyful pause in the exercise of omnipotent creative energy. The Infinite Worker, surveying everything that he had made, saw that it was very good, and rejoiced in its perfection. Every true life is brightened with these holidays—holy days. This is a holiday for you, my young friends. May your future lives be full of the days of brightness and joy! I wish I could tell you how to make them so. This is the secret that I would whisper in your listening ears to-day. This is the gem that I would drop into the jewel-box of your memories at this hour.

Finished! To a cynical spirit there might seem to be an irony in the use of the word with reference to anything that can be planned or done in this life. But I have no sympathy with the spirit that would belittle this present life and brand it with incompleteness and failure. This is a good world. It is not in any sense a failure. No, my young friends, I come not to wail a dirge in the ears of youth and hope to-day, but rather to sound

a true note in the harmonies of a universe ruled by the God of goodness and love.

Incompleteness is the complaint of the pessimist and the taunt of the infidel. But I see it not. I do see slow growth and gradual development. I do see decay and what we call death on this plane of being. But I see no incompleteness. In the divine order everything is beautiful in its time. It is only when that order is violated that deformity, discord, and misery result. In a true sense this life may be as complete as that of the angels of God. The prayer that the will of God may be done on earth as the angels do it in heaven is fulfilled in every true life. The bud, the bloom, the fruit are all complete, each in its season, in the life-work of every true soul.

To many there is a vagueness in the expression, "life-work." Many a nature, rich in undeveloped capability, has dreamed away life's opportunity because no such work was found, or moped it away because it did not come in the shape desired. The deepest and wisest saying of George Eliot is, that our duties are chosen for us. When we first awake to moral consciousness we find ourselves in a moving current already made for us, and are swept on with it as resistlessly as the blue waters of the Cumberland flow onward till they meet and mingle with the Tennessee's sister wave. We cannot control the current of events. We can only do our duty as it comes to us day by day. Young people of both sexes talk of seeking a career, when the career is ready made for them by inherited relationships, obligations, and conditions. The blessedness of life is found in accepting these relationships, obligations, and conditions, and bravely fighting the battle of life on the arena where God has placed us. I would not repress lofty aspiration

nor clip the wings of imagination that would soar into realms of ideal beauty, but I would have you plant your feet on the solid rounds of the ladder of duty in your upward movement. I would not banish the glamour of poetry and sentiment from your sky, but I would have your everyday life transfigured with the light reflected from God's face. It is in this soil of the everyday life that the fair flower of blessedness blooms in its divinest beauty. It is in the home circle that it sheds the fragrance of paradise. Let the truism be repeated: it is not so much the sort of service in which we shall be employed as the spirit in which it will be rendered that will determine the happiness or misery, the success or failure, of our lives. God will choose your sphere and allot to you your work if you are willing. He has a plan of life for each of you as definite as the orbit in which this earth sweeps around the sun. Take this thought into your minds to-day, and take God into your life—into all its plans, purposes, hopes, and aspirations, so that it may not connect itself only with time, and death, and oblivion, but with immortality, eternity, and God.

Do not attempt too much. Perhaps it is not necessary that the average modern young lady should be warned against overwork. Very few of the young ladies of my acquaintance are in any danger of suicide from this cause. But it is true that many, forgetting the limitations of human life, form no definite plan of living, and so they take an unsatisfying sip of everything and get no full draught of anything. It is true of women as it is of men that to be or to do anything of consequence in this age of the world they must specialize. You cannot be a woman of fashion, a literary woman, and a good housekeeper all at once, any more than a man can

be a doctor, preacher, farmer, and justice of the peace all at the same time. Some women make this experiment, and the results are peculiar. They write poetry the reading of which sets your teeth on edge; the dinners they set before you would give an anaconda dyspepsia; and their fashionable airs are awkward burlesques of the elegant fripperies of society. You must make a choice. You cannot have everything at once. Grasping at all, you lose all. But there is some precious prize for each one. Genius is a universal gift. Every one of you is a genius. On each one of you God has bestowed some special endowment. There is some one thing you can do better than another. But when I speak of genius, you at once think of art, literature, or music. It is sad to think of the money and time that have been wasted in trying to develop powers that did not exist. In some institutions of learning visited by me I have gone into the art department and gazed upon landscapes such as God never made; "impossible mountains lifted into the encumbered sky"; cows that would have made Barnum's fortune as natural curiosities; horses that never had a prototype except in a nightmare; trees such as never grew on land, and ships such as never sailed on water. And then the music I have heard from unhappy girls who had ambition, or whose mothers were ambitious for them, but who lacked time and tune and touch! There is a pathos about a piano. No other instrument has ever endured such persecution. No other instrument has ever inflicted more pain upon those who were not blessed with either deafness or the privilege of flight. The piano, the everlasting piano! I hope I may be forgiven for the conventional hypocrisy of which it has caused me to be guilty a hundred times when, after listen-

ing to piece after piece from one of these coffee-mill performers with my nerves so tortured that I was ready to scream in agony, I have asked for more! Genius does not always lie in these directions. Sometimes it does. There are poets, painters, and musicians. I have no fear that in these remarks I shall discourage any true child of genius. The wingèd bird will fly. The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table has a beautiful but fallacious little poem entitled "The Voiceless," in which he says:

A few can touch the magic string,
And noisy Fame is proud to win them:
Alas for those that never sing,
But die with all their music in them!

We might almost be thankful that some of these poets did die with all their music in them. A true song bird will sing—and so, alas! will the crow, the jaybird, the catbird, and the goose. There is no ground for fear that genius will not know itself when it comes in any of these forms. But, coming in other forms, it is too often a gift unrecognized or despised by its owner

The best gifts are the common gifts. There is no richer gift to a woman than a sweet, magnetic voice: it is better than poetry, philosophy, or piano playing. A loud-voiced woman is always at a disadvantage, unless she is very beautiful and brilliant. I advise every one of you to cultivate the gift if you possess it, and to acquire it if you have it not. Cultivate it? How? By earnest thinking and the culture of gentle affections. The tone of the thought and the disposition of the heart react upon all the organs by which the soul finds expression.

The woman who has a genius for sympathy is richly endowed. She blesses the home where she

presides as a mother or ministers as daughter and sister. She carries sunshine and helpfulness into the abodes of sin and want. She brightens all the paths she treads, and blesses every circle she enters. Not only married women and betrothed maidens have this gift, but single women too. If I have ever known angels in human form they belonged to the class called old maids; pure and unselfish single women who, instead of making homes for themselves, have devoted their lives to others, practicing a self-abnegation beyond the comprehension of lower natures, and winning the brightest crowns that will be worn in heaven; sweet and gentle souls wedded to religion and humanity, walking the earth stainless in their white, vestal robes, the counselors of youth and inexperience, the consolers of sorrow, the safe repositories of family troubles and secret griefs, the pillars of the Church, the mothers of orphanage, the salt of the earth, and the lights of the world.

And then there is the gift of—what shall I call it?—the gift of household magic, the quality that enables its possessor without apparent strain or hurry to keep all things in order about the home. Such a woman makes a poem of the cottage or mansion over which she presides. She herself is a poem sweeter than Homer or Shakespeare ever sung. This includes the gift of *cooking*, a gift every woman ought to acquire. Every lady ought to know how to make good bread, good butter, and good coffee. These are the staples of good living. The art of making bad butter is carried to perfection in this country, and there are women who make coffee for forty years and make it worse and worse to the very last. The lady who can make a better waffle than her neighbors is a genius and a public benefactress. This matter of good cook-

ing is one of even national importance. Good cooking makes good digestion; good digestion makes good temper; good temper makes happy homes; happy homes make happy communities; happy communities make happy states; and happy states make a happy nation. So you see the happiness of this nation depends upon knowing how to make good bread, good butter, and good coffee.

Do not undertake too much, but finish what you begin. Finish things. There are some minds that are inherently superficial and fragmentary, and never will be entirely cured of this defect. They never more than half finish anything. They read a book half through and then throw it aside. If they make a garment, it has to be made over again. In their housekeeping everything is slipshod—nothing is finished except the patience of a visitor. This organic slipshoddy cannot be eradicated. If a man marries a woman of this sort, he must bear his fate with manly fortitude, and take his cross as a means of grace. But it is not in every case organic. It is often the result of evil example and bad training, and in such cases it may be cured by cultivating the habit of finishing things. Let everything you do be your best. Make quality, not quantity, your aim. Habit will overcome everything except organic bias, and that it can modify and keep in abeyance. The whole of human nature is a unit, and a loose rivet at one point weakens the movement of every part. The woman who gives me a cup of bad coffee at breakfast I would suspect of carelessness concerning the ninth commandment. Doughy biscuit would lead me to expect half-formed opinion and crudeness of thought in the mistress of the house. The furniture of the house is the counterpart of that of the mind of its owner or occupant. I have seen houses that remind-

ed me of Mrs. Nickleby's conversation. The reflex influence upon the moral nature of accuracy, thoroughness in finishing the little tasks of life, is worthy of your consideration, my young friends.

Another view of this subject claims attention. The *pleasure* of finishing things is one of the most exquisite within the reach of a human being. The simple pleasure of achievement is an evidence of the goodness of God who conjoins duty with delight, proportioning the subjective benefit to the pain and toil of all right endeavor. There is a perpetual and profound dissatisfaction in the mind of every person who is conscious that he is not doing his best, but a perpetual joy in the contemplation of any work which we have perfected according to the measure of our ability. When we fail to take pleasure in what we do, it is because we have gone out of our sphere or become morbid.

Sweet is the pleasure Itself cannot spoil!
Is not true leisure One with true toil?
Thou that would'st take it, Still do thy best;
Use it, not waste it; Else 'tis no rest.

Do your best in all you do, and your lives will shine in ever-increasing beauty and your hearts will sing with ever-deepening joy. Put your best into your life-work, and God will put his best into your nature and your destiny. This he will do by the very laws that he has inwrought into your being, and in fulfillment of his gracious assurance that if you are faithful over a few things, you shall be made ruler over many things; if you are faithful in that which is least, you will be intrusted with that which is greatest.

Finished! In an absolute sense there is nothing finished here. We all feel this in our best and truest moments. The materialists who are doing such good work in the fields of science and litera-

ture and such bungling work elsewhere have an undercurrent of belief, a sort of subconsciousness of a life to come like that which was wrung from the heart of the chief of scoffers as he gazed upon the pallid face and still form of his dead brother. The soul recoils from the abyss of materialism. Imprisoned in matter, it pants for freedom,

Like some cage-born bird, that hath
A restless prescience—however won—
Of a broad pathway leading to the sun,
With promptings of an oft-reprovèd faith,
In sunward yearnings. Stricken tho' her breast,
And faint her wings with beating at the bars
Of sense, she looks beyond outlying stars,
And only in the Infinite finds rest.

Finished! If this life were all, there would indeed be a mockery in the word. I have known young men to win the highest honors of our best schools, and go forth from their halls, followed by the admiration, affection, and bright hopes of parents, teachers, and friends, only to sicken, die, and be buried in a few short months. Their images are before me now.

They, the young and strong, who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the roadside fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life.

And I have seen young maidens, in whom were sweetly blended the dignity of high intellectuality and the almost angelic charm of womanly beauty and goodness, fade away in their loveliness and vanish forever from the circles they were so well fitted to bless and to adorn. There comes a chill and a sickness at the heart in thus seeing genius, goodness, and beauty perish from the earth. Did I say perish? No, no! They have not perished. Death to them was only the completion of one stage in the journey through the eternal years.

Death to them meant only progress, for there is no progress without death. This law is written on the very face of the earth and in its heart. It embraces all life and all forward movement on this plane of existence, and everywhere we see evidences and illustrations of its operation. It is seen in the development of the vegetable and animal life of our globe, whose forms have successively perished and given place to other and higher forms. We see the operation of this law in the ordinary phenomena of vegetable growth: the seed must die before it can be quickened, must rot before it can germinate, spring up, and grow. This law operates in the intellectual and moral progress of the human race. Truth springs from the ashes of error. Every onward movement of humanity dates from the death and burial of effete ideas and organizations. Ascending a step higher, we see this law operating in the providential development of Christianity in the earth. The patriarchal dispensation taught its lesson, vanished, and was succeeded by the Mosaic; that was followed by the prophetic, and that in the full development of Christianity in the coming of the Son of God. Rising still higher, we are led to believe that this law that death is necessary to progress shall be illustrated in the sublime catastrophe which is to terminate the present order of things on this planet, and bring in the millennial reign and glory, when we shall have a new heaven and a new earth. This old world shall die, but the new earth shall be born to be the fit abode of the saints, one of the many mansions prepared for the family of God. I love to think of this world freed from the bondage of sin and the reign of death as one of God's many mansions for the abode of his children. Sometimes I have felt differently. Bruised, weary, and sorrow-

ing, I have almost wished to lie down and die, and then wing my flight from earth never to see it again, and hoping to forget that I had ever trodden its paths of pain or tasted its cup of grief. But oftener I have felt that earth was dear to me—dear from the memory of its sacred joys, dearer from the memory of its more sacred sorrows. The glorified spirits in paradise remember the spots hallowed by the experiences of earth. The memory of the heart never forgets either in this life or the next. One such memory comes to my mind now. It was a bright, calm October day. With a dear friend I stood on the banks of the beautiful Holston at Lyon's Point, near Knoxville, Tennessee. Under that sky so deep and blue, in sight of the solemn mountains stretching away in the dim distance, the gentle wind whispering its music in the tree tops above us, the autumnal forest flashing in more than tropical splendor of gold and scarlet and crimson, the river at our feet singing itself to sleep in the stillness—oh! it was a holy and blessed hour; heart spoke to heart, soul answered to soul; sky, mountain, forest, river, all distilled their influence upon us, and we heard in the depths of our souls the Still Small Voice in which God speaks to us when we are ready to hear. Such a scene needed but little change to make it suitable for the new earth—and O my friend, shall we not meet again, and look up to the same sky and hear nature's voice and God's together?

Nothing good and true can perish. Happy are the early dead! "Their eternal summer shall not fade." Their names are encircled with the halo of everlasting youth. Their endowments were the gift of God. Their noble powers still exist, and are exerted in a wider, grander sphere. That loveliness that brightened the earthly home

and left it so dark when it took its flight now finds a fitting home with the angels. Every real acquisition made on earth is so much treasure laid up in heaven. Every well-finished task of time is put to our credit for eternity. Every word truly spoken, every prayer earnest and believing, every gentle ministry of love, every burden borne with patience, every battle fought with the courage of honest conviction, every sorrow endured submissively, are blocks polished here for the mansion that awaits us in the immortal life to which we are hastening. There is no incompleteness or failure in a destiny like this. It leaves nothing to be desired. Our capacity for acquisition is boundless, and all we acquire we shall retain forever. The thought is too vast for comprehension, the blessing too great for the gratitude and praises of mortality and time, and must therefore be relegated to immortality and eternity. Every hope is a prophecy. Our thought cannot be grander than our destiny. Then "lead, lead me on, my hopes. I know that ye are true and not vain. Vanish from my eyes day after day, but arise in new forms. I will follow your holy deception; follow till ye have brought me to the feet of my Father in heaven, where I shall find you all, with folded wings, spangling the sapphire dusk whereon stands his throne which is our home."

PART III.



THE PULPIT.

THE HEAVENLY VISION.

TEXT: "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."
(Acts xxvi. 19.)

THE HEAVENLY VISION.

AMONG all the thousands of the young men of Israel, why was it that only to Saul of Tarsus was granted this heavenly vision? This question goes deep into the heart of things as we find them in this world.

The heavenly vision requires two factors—a Divine Revealer and a human recipient. Not one of the apostles was chosen arbitrarily or unconditionally. Each one was chosen because of his adaptation to the work he was to do. In Galilee there were other sturdy fishermen besides Peter, John, James, and Andrew, and other tax collectors besides the keen-edged, lynx-eyed Matthew. The ground of their call was in the men themselves as well as in God's purpose. But what of Judas? Poor Judas! A single lurid flash reveals his doom. It were better for that man that he had never been born—a fate worse than annihilation. John tells us that Judas was a thief. Yet, he was called to the apostleship. That call could not have been made in ignorance of his true character, for Jesus knew what was in man. A thief he may have been in organic bias, but nevertheless he had his heavenly vision and his call and opportunity. Every man and woman has his or her opportunity. Responsibility is measured by opportunity in every case. Judas was an apostate: falling from such a height, he fell to rise no more.

There is a solemn passage in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews that declares in substance the moral impossibility of the recovery of a soul that takes this awful plunge from the lofty

height of beloved discipleship into the depths of apostasy.

Judas might have been a messenger of God carrying the light of life to the world, but by his own choice he became a traitor. Judas might have been Paul, and Paul might have been Judas. Each had his choice and his chance. In the lexicon of God, choice means choice. There can be no choice unless you have power to choose either way.

The heavenly vision came to Saul of Tarsus, when he was ready for it. In all Israel there was not a heart so hungry nor a zeal so burning as his. He was no dreamer, shirker, or trimmer. As Robert Louis Stevenson puts it: "If St. Paul had not been a very zealous Pharisee, he would have been a colder Christian." He was an extraordinary man, and was therefore made the recipient of an extraordinary revelation. This is God's way. He is no respecter of persons, but he does respect his own laws of moral development and providential administration in dealing with nations and individuals. In all God's beneficent working for mankind man must be his coworker. On this high plane we stand, and we encounter a commensurate peril. Everywhere in God's universe peril is measured by endowment and opportunity. According to this law, genius makes a Paul or a Judas.

To each of us the heavenly vision is essentially what that of Saul of Tarsus was to him—the revelation of duty. It comes at one supreme moment, but in most cases it is a long time on the way. All his previous life had Saul of Tarsus been undergoing preparation for the vision that came to him on his journey to Damascus. The teaching of his pious Jewish parents; the influence of his illustrious preceptor, Gamaliel; his remembrance of the martyr Stephen's dying face and dying words;

the unanswered questions that had agitated his mind; the unsatisfied hunger of his heart—all these were steps by which he had climbed up to the height of receptivity where a revelation was possible to him. The supreme heavenly vision is preceded by flashes of partial illumination. The final imperative summons of the voice of God is preceded by many premonitory whisperings to the inner ear. Saul, on his way to Damascus, bore within himself the subjective conditions of the marvelous experience that changed his life and fixed his destiny. The voice that spoke to him answered the question that was burning in his soul. The sacred oracles speak only to sincere inquirers. For the indifferent, the scornful, the willfully deaf, they have no voice. The great crises of human life reveal what men are—that is all. The decision must be made then and there without delay, but the forces that determine what that decision shall be have been gathering in the soul during many silent but fateful years. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear; no others can.

Paul was converted in that moment when he obeyed the heavenly vision vouchsafed unto him. By the choice of his will he took Jesus into his life, making him the supreme object and center of his thought, purpose, aspiration, and affection. This is what conversion means—surrender and choice. His specifically Christian culture came afterwards—a culture many-sided, symmetrical, grand, beautiful. This is the true order—first conversion, then culture. If you will make that choice to-day, you will go home from this service with a new joy in your soul. This choice must be your own act, and it is the only gate of entrance into the true life. By wrong choice man broke loose from God; by right choice he comes back to God.

One of two processes goes in all lives—a process of upward growth and moral development, or of declension and death. Every day is a day of probation. Freedom of will, power of choice, and the necessity for choice, will remain with you to the end of your life. After your final victory will come your coronation.

According to the habitual temper of your souls will the crises of your lives be met. When the habitual tone of a soul is sincere, its tendency to resume an erect position after it has stooped to evil is stronger than that of another whose allegiance has all along been only half-hearted. The half-decided soul is moving down an inclined plane, and it is only a question of time when he will reach the bottom—and then comes a catastrophe terribly sudden in its manifestation, gradual as it was in its approach. Moral gravitation is as certain in its operation as physical gravitation. There are no sudden hopeless falls in the moral sphere. The man who trifles with sin mortgages himself to Satan, and foreclosure is only a question of time and persistence. The effort to live a double life always fails. The true polarity of the soul will reveal itself; the hypocrite's mask will be torn off. Truth taken as the companion and guide of a human life will draw everything that is good in her train. She is from God, and will lead you to God. The lie is from hell, and will drag the soul thither. Even a little leaven of conscious insincerity taints the whole nature, and will wreck the entire being of its victim. There are constitutional liars as there are constitutional thieves—pseudomaniacs we may call them, to match the kleptomaniacs. You have known both classes of unfortunates. You ask, What can a constitutional liar do for himself? With the help of God let him

make battle against his hereditary besetment, and conquer it. The human will, rightly exercised, is adequate to all the needs of a true life. The resources of God may be drawn on without limit for the strength requisite for obedience to God. The command to obey implies the promise of the power to obey. Upon the life of some one who hears me to-day may rest the shadow of some hereditary weakness. That weakness, whatever it may be, may actually be made subservient to his safety and tributary to his blessedness. Human nature is a unit. That which strengthens any part strengthens the whole man. Therefore the watchfulness, the self-restraint, the sense of special need for God's help to enable you to overcome this hereditary bias toward evil, will regulate the whole moral nature, tone up the whole life; and thus an inherited disability may become, under the operation of a compensatory law of God, a factor in the development of a true life and in securing a blessed destiny. In a word, there is an upward way for all who will walk therein. For the least favored there is hope. On the other hand, no superiority of natural endowment or special advantages as to opportunity will suffice to save any man who will not do his best.

In the best families we find "black sheep"—wanderers who go to destruction, so far as we know, while poor boys rise to usefulness and honor despite the heaviest disabilities of heredity and environment. He who truly does his best to-day will do better to-morrow. He who willingly falls below his best to-day will find himself sunken to a still lower level to-morrow. A side-tracked train cannot make the original schedule. By a voluntary backward movement, or by a failure to go forward when the revelation of duty is made plain in

the present tense, something will be lost beyond recovery.

It remains true that God deals with every man in the present tense. New crises of life come to us with the increasing light that enables us to see clearer and farther. God loves us too well to allow us to rest satisfied while we are consciously unfaithful to our convictions. Tests of character, we have said, come suddenly. Decisions must be made instantly. When the telegraph bore a message to a candidate for the presidency of the United States of America asking what reply should be given to a charge made against him in the newspapers, his fortunes at least for this world were pivoted upon the answer. "Tell the truth," wired back this sturdy son of a preacher. Had he lied or equivocated in that crisis, that would have been the last of him as a politician. Underlying that answer was the belief in God and the belief in truth and righteousness which had been inwrought into every fiber of his moral being in the Christian home in which he had been reared.

The heavenly vision—the revelation of duty—came to John Wesley when he gave himself to a self-denying ministry to the masses when he might have aspired to the highest honors of the venerable ecclesiasticism to which he belonged—an ecclesiasticism whose roll of great names is long, and whose scholars, poets, sages, and saints are the common heritage of Christendom.

It was a heavenly vision—the revelation of duty—when Francis Asbury renounced home ties and home comforts and gave himself to a life of self-denial and tireless activity unsurpassed in the history of the Church, exhibiting a Christianity militant, ever-moving, victorious.

It was a heavenly vision—the revelation of duty

—to William Capers when the duty and feasibility of evangelizing the negroes of the South flashed upon his mind. Disregarding all considerations of bodily ease, turning a deaf ear to the dissuasions of timid advisers, yielding to no discouragements from the faithless and doubting, he entered as a pioneer upon a work where many have followed in his footsteps. He initiated a movement whose far-reaching results God only can foresee, but which may include the solution of the race question in America and the civilization and evangelization of Africa.

When George F. Pierce, at the call of God, turned away from the honorable profession of the law and all secular ambitions and pursuits, he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision that flashed upon his soul in his young manhood. He could have sold his heavenly birthright for a mess of political pottage, as others have done. His will was free, as yours is to-day. He chose the way of Christian duty and self-denial, and followed a path which shone more and more to the closing day of his great career; living and dying poor in this world's goods, yet making many rich toward God, and furnishing an illustrious example of the true blessedness and glory of a life hid with Christ in God.

The heavenly vision—the revelation of duty—came to Frederick William Robertson when, with all the allurements and advantages of the rich and cultured parishes that his genius made accessible to him, he chose rather to preach to the workingmen of Brighton, whose greater need made a stronger claim upon his service. The light of his sanctified genius that now shines so brightly on both sides of the Atlantic might have been quenched in an atmosphere of luxury and ease.

The true heavenly vision is clear vision. It penetrates the disguises of error, the mists of ignorance, and the darkness of sin. Daniel in Babylon, Joseph in Egypt, Esther in the palace of Shushan—every man and every woman who has borne a cross that humanity might be blessed—furnishes an illustration. The heavenly vision not infrequently comes in the choice of a field of Christian service. It may come in the recognition of obligation to surrender some forbidden object dear to the natural heart. It may come with the command to ally oneself with a minority for the sake of a principle. It may come with a decision to choose poverty with a good conscience rather than affluence through wrongdoing or connivance with wrongdoers. When Thomas F. Bayard refused even to consider a proposal for investment in the *Credit Mobilier* without an assurance that it was a matter which could in nowise be affected by his vote or influence as a United States Senator, his countrymen recognized that if he had not a heavenly vision he had at least before his mind and in his heart the true chivalry that is without fear and without reproach.

Whoso cherishes no heavenly aspiration can have no heavenly vision. The heavenly vision—the revelation of duty—will come to you when you are tuned for the touch. These are great times for us because they are our times. All that this life can bring us of good or evil is in these times in which we live. If I could read your thought at this moment, I could foretell what these times will bring to you. Your visions, what are they?

To many Americans the heavenliest of all visions is a vision of public office, with a salary attached thereto. Patriotism in this form is not extinct in these United States. There is nothing

wrong in officeholding when it comes as the recognition of genuine public spirit and the expression of the confidence and esteem of good men; but it were better to be a bootblack than a small politician, a mere hanger-on of party, somebody else's man rather than your own man, a little jumping-jack moving when a man of larger brain and stronger will pulls the strings of party management.

To other young Americans the heavenliest of visions is a short cut to riches by speculation or peculation—the crooked letter S makes the difference between them—by which they hope to enjoy luxuries they never earned and riches stained with dishonor. To others there is nothing better than the vision of unlimited indulgence of the appetites, which they mistake for freedom and happiness.

But possibly before the youthful imagination there floats another and yet brighter vision—the vision of the ideal person who is to share your destiny, who is to ennoble and brighten your life on earth. Without this vision this world would indeed be a duller and colder world to many of the truest souls in it.

But forget not that the supremely heavenly vision is the revelation of duty. Upon us of this generation the ends of the earth have come. What has been achieved during this wonderful nineteenth century that is soon to close only suggests the possibilities of the century soon to dawn. Our vision sweeps a field of boundless opportunity, a field as new as that which was opened to the pioneers who felled the first oaks and plowed the first furrows in this new world. Every age has its own work. Every man has his own opportunity. You have your chance, as your forefathers had theirs. Science has only begun its career of discovery. The world

is just beginning to spell out its first lessons in political economy and sociology. There is no occasion for any of us to look backward to the past and wish that we had an opportunity to do something. This is God's good world, and for us this is its Golden Age.

MEEROZ.

TEXT: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." (Judges v. 23.)

MEROZ.

MEROZ is a place mentioned only once in the Bible—and by that one mention it is pilloried in immortal shame. It was situated in the northern part of Palestine: the site is now unknown.

At the time of the invasion of Israel by Sisera, a call was made upon the nation for soldiers. The call was responded to by a portion of the people, a great battle was fought, and by the help of God a glorious and decisive victory was achieved. Deborah the prophetess celebrated the event in a song of triumph, in which, giving God the glory, she recites the part borne by the several tribes in the struggle, bestowing praise or censure according to the part each had performed. Meroz had played an inglorious part, and is thus anathematized: “Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.”

The struggle was over, the opportunity gone. Meroz had failed, and must now bear the consequences. We are left to conjecture as to the cause of this failure of Meroz in the time of trial.

1 It might have been cowardice. Israel was then weak and despised; her enemy was great and powerful.

2. It might have been owing to a thought like this: There will be enough to fight the battle without us. If we do not go, others will.

3. Or it might have been indolence.

Cowardice; devolution, or devolving your work upon others; indolence—these three bring the curse of the righteous God upon all who come not to the help of the Lord in the day of battle.

A NEGLECTED STUDY.

TEXT: "Study to be quiet." (1 Thess. iv. 2.)

A NEGLECTED STUDY.

YOU may think that this is rather a strange word for these times. What we hear on all sides is: Study to be wise; study to be rich; study to keep up with the times; study to be great; study to make a stir in the world; study to find out all that is going on around you; study to grab for your share of what is to be gotten. This is a strange, sweet note that floats down from another sphere—low, but sweet and clear: Study to be quiet. It may be the message specially needed by some burdened, sorrowful soul to whom it comes to-day.

The Church at Thessalonica has been called the model New Testament Church. The apostle Paul speaks of them as exemplars of the saving power of the gospel, having received the word of truth with peculiar joy and exhibited extraordinary fidelity in maintaining the cause of Christ. They were particularly commended because of the prevalence of brotherly love among themselves; the charity of every one of them, according to the apostle's testimony, abounding. How much the apostle loved these Thessalonian Christians, and how highly he commended them, his two letters to them furnish ample testimony.

But some errors had crept into the Church at Thessalonica which disturbed its peace and retarded its growth and prosperity. A portion of the membership of the Church had allowed themselves to get into a state of feverish excitement concerning the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was very proper that they should feel

an interest in this matter of the second coming of Christ. It is plainly promised, and is frequently referred to as an encouragement to believers to be faithful and persevering in the discharge of duty, and patient under tribulations and persecutions. The teaching of the gracious Head of the Church in this connection is designed to guard us against fanaticism and morbid excitement on the one hand, and unbelief and indifference on the other. They that love the Lord's appearing look for it with holy joy, and will be ready. Are you one of those? It is not strange that from time to time in different ages the Church has been agitated on this subject. It began in the Church at Thessalonica in the year 60, and is now agitating many people in many places in this year 1897. It is curious to note how various have been the opinions, and how gross the misconceptions, of all sorts of alarmists and enthusiasts with regard to this sublime transaction. The Thessalonians believed that the second coming was at hand, and became so greatly excited about it that they were in danger of neglecting the daily devotions and practical duties of the Christian life.

This morbid excitability concerning the second coming of Christ naturally led them to fall into another error. They neglected the ordinary business affairs of life, and became a sort of hangers-on or loafers, too pious after their fanatical fashion to work, making debts they could not pay, and thus bringing reproach upon the Church. And this led naturally to another evil: having no legitimate business of their own to attend to, they became "busybodies," as the apostle calls them in his Second Epistle—that is, intermeddlers in other people's affairs, gossips, tale-bearers, mischief-makers. This breed of sanctimonious gossips—men and women who express the envy, jealousy,

and suspicion of their little, morbid souls with the elongated visages and canting phrases peculiar to themselves—is not extinct. Thessalonica had this breed of ecclesiastical mosquitoes, and they are buzzing and stinging to this very day throughout Christendom, from the Thames to the Cumberland.

The Thessalonians also fell into the error of immoderate sorrow for their dead. Their thought had become confused and their hearts even below the heathen level. They had enough of Christianity to refine, exalt, and intensify their affections without the clear perception of the true Christian doctrine with regard to the future life and inward assurance given by the Holy Spirit to the children of God that they *are* children of one Father, heirs of the same inheritance, and are to live together with him forever. They illustrated the truth of that saying of St. Paul, that if in this life only Christians have hope, they are of all men most miserable. If there be no meeting place for the parted, the holy relationships which God has ordained and the holy affections with which he has endowed us become mockeries and instruments of torture to our breaking hearts. These Thessalonians possessed Christian sensibilities with semi-heathenized ideas concerning the future life, and they were therefore dissatisfied, restless, and distressed.

Under these circumstances they needed the apostle's injunction: *Study to be quiet*. There is a principle to be understood. There is a grace to be attained.

There is a principle to be understood. The truth does not lie on the surface. Study is demanded if we would get into the right attitude of soul with regard to this life and that which is to

come. Study to be quiet: this is the very blessing we need. But the more we study the more disquieted we become, unless we study in the right way. Contradiction, confusion, mystery meet us everywhere on the plane of nature. Human history seems alternately a great tragedy or a huge farce. Every human life is a tragedy: it ends in death, and death is a tragedy whenever and wherever it comes. And it is so brief! This side of human life is uppermost in the thought and literature of all lands in all ages. This is the surface view, and it is very disquieting. It begets on the one hand the recklessness of spirit that says, Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die. Or on the other hand it leads to the spirit of despair that leads a man to curse the day he was born. The disquiet of unbelief is divided into these two schools—the flippant and reckless, and the sad and hopeless. Many who seem to belong to the former class really belong to the latter: men and women who seek to hush the questionings of their hungry souls by the assumption of agnostic airs and to deaden their sensibilities by forcing the idiot's laughter in the presence of the awful mystery of death. On this side, and from this point of view, this is a sad, sad, unquiet world. To see it aright we must study God's three books—the Bible, Nature, Providence.

We must study the Bible: first of all and most of all, we must study the Bible. The Bible is what it claims to be—a revelation of truth, a revelation of God from God. Yes, it *is* a revelation; not a conundrum, not a puzzle for guesswork, but a revelation. It reveals an infinite God. We cannot understand Infinity, but we can believe in it, we can trust it. It reveals a personal God, not a blind force. This personal God possesses the attributes

of goodness, wisdom, and power: yea, he is the Supreme Goodness, the Supreme Wisdom, and the Supreme Power—just such a God as can govern and ought to govern the universe.

We must study Nature as the revelation of God in the natural world. The laws of nature are the expression of God's method of working in that sphere. The forces of what we call nature are mighty, but they are all under the control of their Creator. A sparrow does not fall to the ground without the operation of the same law of God that guides the flaming worlds in space. The right study of God's book of nature quiets the mind. In the midst of apparent disorder on the surface, we see that the physical universe is under the reign of absolute law, and we know that behind the law is the Lawgiver. Earthquakes, cyclones, water-spouts, lightning bolts that kill, and disease and pain in the natural sphere, are the correlatives of the disorder that is seen in the moral sphere; but deep study shows us that the one and the other are equally under the reign of law, and we can be quiet. The forces of nature will never get beyond the control of the Author of nature.

We must study Providence as the revelation of God in human history. Here too we must study deeply to find quiet. The history of the human race, in the light of divine revelation, demonstrates that there is a divine plan and purpose in the lives of nations and of individuals. Surface reading and fragmentary knowledge may disclose only apparent confusion and chance work, but close reading and deep thinking and wider views demonstrate that the Lord reigns, and that therefore the earth may rejoice in his rulership and rest under his rule. He rules and he overrules, making even the wrath of men to praise him, never overriding

or disregarding the moral freedom of man on the one hand, nor for one moment abdicating his own supreme dominion on the other. Seeing this clearly, and believing it firmly, the Christian student does not lose his quietness of soul every time a strong nation oppresses a weak one, or when a nominating convention or a popular election seems to go wrong.

There is a grace to be attained, as well as a principle to be understood. Quietude is an experience. This implies that we must study in the school of prayer. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself is our teacher. *Thy kingdom come*—this is the prayer he has taught us to pray. In its wider sense it is a prayer for the success of the gospel in all the earth. We are reminded that the resources of the Head of the Church are equal to the mighty work of the conversion of the whole world. The kingdom and the power and the glory belong to him. He must reign until all enemies are put under his feet. Success is certain. Let Paul plant and Apollos water: the Lord will send the increase. There can be no more doubt of the conversion of the world to Christ than of his existence. Not a sermon, not a printed page of Christian literature, not a prayer, not a dollar nor a dime, shall be wasted in this service—if so be that the sermon is preached, the literature printed and distributed, the prayer made, and the dollar or dime given in true faith. The gospel of the grace of God *shall* accomplish that which he pleases, and prosper in the thing whereunto it is sent. That is God's "*shall*": behind it are all the resources of the Godhead. And here we find *quiet* for our minds in the survey of the needs of the world and the resources of Christianity.

Let us study to be quiet in the school of Christ.

His kingdom must be set up in our hearts. That kingdom consists of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Righteousness first, then peace—this is the order, and it cannot be reversed. Repentance, forgiveness—pardon, peace—this is the order. The true believer thus finds quiet for his soul. If you are such a believer, you will understand what I am saying. It can be known only by experience. “*My peace* give I unto you,” said Jesus. “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,” is his promise to his followers. He told us that it was expedient for us that he should go away. Why? Because in his bodily presence he was under the limitations of matter as to times and places, and therefore could be in only one place at one time. But having, as it were, turned himself into spirit, and poured himself upon the world, he is bound by none of the limitations of matter. Wonderful is this truth. The personal Christ diffuses his personality through all his flock in all ages and in all lands. It is true, but it exceeds comprehension. Christ in us, the hope of glory: Christ with us, the realization of a present-tense blessedness. Nothing less could satisfy our souls, overwhelming as it is to our minds. He has been with us, he is still with us, and he will be with us to the end.

One thing more we want. The great heart of St. Paul knew what would be in our hearts. It is a blessed thing for Jesus to be with us here, and for us to be with him forever. But the question rises in our hearts: What of our loved ones who have gone before us to the grave? Have we looked upon their faces and heard their voices for the last time? A heaven without the presence of those who were dearest to us here on earth would lack an element of completeness. It cannot be that

Christianity would mock the very hope which it had kindled in human souls. It cannot be that it would reveal an immortality without immortalizing holy love. Knowing the solicitude that was in their sorrowful souls, St. Paul adds: "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." With this hope in our hearts we can be quiet. The sleepers who sleep in Jesus only sleep. We will meet them in that morning to part no more. The heaven of peace is in the thought.

A TALK ABOUT TALK.

TEXT: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." (Mal. iii. 16.)

A TALK ABOUT TALK.

AN important truth is suggested and illustrated in this bit of Old Testament history. That truth is this: That the talk of a lifetime is the life. Put all that is said about talk in the Bible together, and you have a body of teaching that will astonish any reader who has not given this subject special attention. It would make a Bible within the Bible. The general proposition announced is worthy of consideration just here: The talk of a lifetime is the life. Give it a subjective application: The talk of your lifetime is *your* life. Tell me what you have said during the last year, and I will then tell you what you have been thinking and doing. There are some notable sayings in the Bible on this point. "Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh," is one of these sayings. The practical apostle James goes so far as to say, "If any offend not in word, the same is a perfect man and able also to bridle the whole body"—a remarkable saying, worthy of our particular study. The Master himself says: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words shalt thou be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." The one sin that is unpardonable is a sin of the tongue, and that is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. This fearful statement is made in the twelfth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. I will not stop here and now to consider it exegetically, but you need not be told that it carries a tremendous weight of meaning. You ask, Can we commit that sin in

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this day? My answer is, Do not run the risk of it. The life here on earth, the verdict of the judgment day, and the destiny beyond being involved in this matter of talk, let us consider it in connection with this text.

Men and women are social beings. They must talk, they will talk. Whether rich or poor, sick or well, sad or glad, young or old, living or dying, they will talk. Like seeks like by the law of social affinities. So it was with these persons referred to in the text. They lived in a dark and troubled period of their country's history. There was a general declension of morals among the people, and the very priests that ministered at the altars of religion were mercenary and profane. But there remained a faithful few who were true to God and his cause. God has never left himself without witness. Elijah, in a fit of deep despondency, thought he was the only faithful soul left in all Israel. Adversity brings the test. These faithful souls, instead of running with the multitude to do evil, drew nearer to God and to each other in the time of trial. They spake often one to another. Their conversations are not reported in detail, but we know what they talked about because we are told what they thought upon—that was the name of God. God's name is God himself. What a fruitful subject for thought and speech is the Infinite God, as he is revealed in creation, providence, and redemption! If these good people had not met together to talk about God, they would have gone elsewhere to talk of other things. In the tenth chapter of Hebrews believers are thus exhorted by St. Paul: "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much

the more, as ye see the day approaching.” The Methodist class meeting was born under substantially the same conditions. It took the place of worldly gossip, cards, and dissipation in general. Genuine revivals of religion are always marked by something of this sort. It is easy and so delightful to talk about religion when the heart is full of it. It is easy to testify to the love of God when that love is shed abroad in the heart. A dead Church is a dumb Church. When the Church ceases to testify, she will cease to live.

Mark you, this does not mean that we are to substitute words for deeds. There is nothing of this sort here. “Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh.” When there is no heart in the words of a professor of religion, they are cold and lifeless. The voluble dispenser of cant may be self-deceiving, but human nature responds to genuineness. A half dozen quiet, kindly words will go farther from one person than a whole hour of noisy exhortation from another. Sincerity is power. If we are sincere in our professed belief that religion is the chief thing in our estimation, it will be first in our speech. But how hard it is to talk about religion when we do not feel it in our hearts! Nobody mistakes the cold-blooded formalist for the warm-hearted disciple who would have all the world to taste and see the salvation which he has found. The best teacher in this matter is the Holy Spirit. We need not fall into cant or fanaticism on the one hand, nor into dumbness or cynicism on the other. Give me an occasional gust of fanaticism rather than unbroken dead stagnation in the Church. Fanaticism means earnestness at least. A zeal that is not according to knowledge is better than none. But the word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit will keep us moving in

the middle of the road or very near it. That one thing we must do: we must keep moving forward. Christians of the genuine type say to the world: "Come and go with us; we will do you good." The counterfeit Christianity says: "If the world will not go with us, we will go with the world." There is a sort that says: "We will make a compromise: we will go half way with the world and the flesh now; but by and by, in old age or amid the thickening shadows of death, we will enter more fully into the kingdom of heaven." That is a delusion that ought to be patent to any man or woman who has intelligence enough to involve moral responsibility. There can be no heaven but for the heavenly-minded. Heaven is not merely a place: it is character. The kingdom of heaven is within us. The guest at that wedding feast must wear the wedding garment. The white robe of holiness must be woven here if we would wear it there. Heaven yonder means heavenly-mindedness here.

The next suggestion of the text is that all in our lives that has been hallowed by the blessing of God is imperishable. God's book of remembrance holds it all. Every word of testimony, every prayer of faith, every song of thanksgiving, every whisper of consolation or of warning—all, all are registered in God's book. Where are your words, my brother? You were not at the meeting: you spoke no word, you offered no prayer, you sang no song, you bore no testimony. You were somewhere else. Your heart was fixed on other things. You ran with the world here, but somehow you hope to be with the faithful servants of God at that day.

Let us take a fresh start from this hour. Let us be encouraged by the mercy and goodness of God. In any absolute sense we cannot undo the

past. A sin is sin. The fact of sin God himself cannot undo. But he can and does forgive. He remembers it against the penitent and pardoned soul no more. It is blotted out in the sense that it will not be remembered against him. Let us be encouraged, but let us not be presumptuous. The fact that God in his mercy forgives sin furnishes a reason why we should avoid even the least appearance of making that mercy an occasion of sin. Sin is not only bitter, but it is mean.

We ourselves never forget anything. What is once in the consciousness abides. Behind the body and the mind there is the spirit that retains forever what it grasps. Nothing is lost. The body may change again and again. Every cell and every tissue of the brain may be changed again and again, but there is a something that holds the record. When old persons say they are losing their memory, they only mean that the bodily machinery by which the memory works is worn and moving heavily and slowly. From time to time they have surprises that forecast the glory and blessedness of the resurrection and immortality that are to come. Just touch the chord of association, and the past, long forgotten, comes back with the vividness of fresh experience. Whoever in later life has revisited the home of childhood has realized this truth. It not unfrequently happens that in the hour and article of death there seems to be a wonderful revival of the memory as the two worlds touch in that solemn and supreme moment. Thank God, we shall not be compelled to begin anew in the freer, fuller life to come. We shall take with us all that is worth keeping. We have memories that this world could not buy; holy affections that are as dear as life—memories that God has hallowed by his touch, affections

that God himself has ordained and blessed. The old McKendree class meeting makes part of the memories that stir some hearts this wintry Sunday in Nashville. The ranks are thinning every year. Those who have gone over to the other side await our coming. To-day their images are before my mind, their words echo in my soul, and by faith I see their beckoning hands and radiant forms inside the gates of that city of God where they wait for us their rest to share. They shine as jewels in the crown of our blessed Christ. There is room for us all. There is grace for us all. There is hope for us all. There is a call to us all to take a fresh start to-day. What we get we keep. Grace abides and abounds. The best things are the surest. Among the surprises that await us in that day the greatest of all will be that we ever doubted the love of God.

A FRESH START.

TEXT: “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrines of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.” (Heb. vi. 1.)

A FRESH START

THE analogies of this text are not to be strained. The apostle would have those to whom he speaks to take a fresh start in the Christian life. They had made a good beginning, but they had stopped short in the way. They had not only not gained, but they had actually lost, the capital with which they had been endowed when they began the Christian life. He wished to unfold to them higher truths than they had yet attained, but they could not receive them. They were obtuse, and could not enter into the loftier revelations of spiritual truth. So the wise apostle halts suddenly in his presentation of the theme that stirs his own soul, the priesthood of Christ—"of whom," he says, "we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God." Shame on such disciples! you say. They had forgotten the very alphabet of the truth and life of the gospel long years after they had entered the school of Christ. They were babes in spiritual stature—not babes in the beauty, freshness, and sweetness of natural childhood, but the stunted babyhood of dwarfs, whose growth has been arrested prematurely. Babyhood is one thing, and dwarfhood is another. A three-year-old girl fully developed in form and feature is beautiful; but a woman thirty years old and three feet high is a different thing altogether. The older she becomes the more beau-

tiful, is nature's law. And so it is in the kingdom of God. Development must be continuous to reach the best results in Christian life and character. In the eyes of God what stunted, withered, abortive souls are found in the Church! I have read of a man who in consequence of an injury to his brain lost all his mental acquisitions, and had to go back and relearn the alphabet and recover his lost knowledge by the same process as at the first. Is there not something analogous in the darkness and paralysis of spiritual perception and function when the soul relapses into sin and sinks into inaction? The light becomes darkness. The unused talent is taken away. The perverted or diseased faculty is extirpated. Read the parable of the talents. This truth is the very heart of it. This law of growth cannot be violated without the saddest results. The African dirt-eaters are horribly ugly, dwarfed creatures, burlesques of humanity, a distinct type of human beings lowest in the scale. Again, can we not perceive an analogy? In the Church there are many who, instead of nourishing their souls with the aliment provided for them, go back to the beggarly elements of the world. Instead of the Bible, they read trash; instead of daily prayer and meditation, their minds dwell on forbidden fancies; instead of the prayer meeting with pilgrims bound for heaven, they rush with the world to its Vanity Fairs; instead of seeking the fellowship of the children of God in the class meeting and in the quiet Christian converse of the domestic or friendly circle, they talk only of the trifles that absorb their frivolous minds and worldly hearts. They turn away from angel's food to—eat dirt! The Church is full of dirt-eaters. Can health, growth, and spiritual strength and beauty be expected un-

der such conditions? A house full of sick and stunted babies, dwarfs, repelling the world, grieving the Spirit, makes a sad caricature of Christianity in the eyes of God and man.

There is but one thing to be done under such circumstances, and that is to make a fresh start. Go back and learn again the first principles of the oracles of God. Ah yes, thank God, you can do this! The text is no less an invitation than a rebuke. Your error is not irretrievable. You may yet get into the right way, and never leave it. Go back to first principles if need be. God help you to judge righteous judgment! God help you to take right action! What are these first principles of the oracles of God? Simply the elementary truths and the elementary experiences of Christianity: repentance and faith, in the experience, and the great facts of a resurrection and a judgment to come, with the proper understanding and observance of the external rites that fitly symbolize these spiritual truths and bring the believer into visible relation to the visible Church. In calling these elementary truths and experiences, they are not disparaged any more than any beginning of life is to be disparaged. The tobacco planters replant when they fail to get a "stand" at first. Sometimes whole fields are replowed and resown in wheat when the frost or the worm or the flood has destroyed the first sowing. This is what we need in the Church—deep plowing and the sowing of the seed of the kingdom in hearts broken into penitence before God. Go back to first principles. Do your first works over again. Repentance toward God will put you in the path you have left, rekindle the light that has been quenched, and wake again the song that once made melody in your heart. Repent toward God—this includes grief for having

sinned against his love, shame for the folly of ingratitude and disobedience. By faith lay hold of the hope set before you. Make a fresh start.

Let the backslider make a fresh start to-day. The long-suffering of God is salvation. The promise is yours. Eternity is before you. Let the dead past go. By diligence in the future atone for delay in the past. Make a fresh start.

Let the unconverted man or woman in the Church make a fresh start on a new and better basis. Start on first principles, not on slight or transient impulses or vague aspirations. Repentance and faith are the broad foundations of the structure of Christian life. Here the figure changes, but the idea is the same, namely: that there must be progress or death in the Christian life. The folly of being always engaged in laying foundations and never building on them is exposed. In building you clear away the rubbish; you dig deep and find solid ground or rock; you lay the foundation; you build thereon; you complete the structure. You go on to perfection. Perfection! this is the goal. Perfection! this is the promise. Perfection! this is the possibility. Perfection! this is the certainty to the believer who goes on. He may stumble, but he need not stop. He may even fall, but he shall rise again. He may walk in darkness at times, but he will go on walking by faith. He will go on.

Make the consecration once for all. Do not revolve on an axis, but go forward. Leave the first principles in the sense that you leave babyhood and grow up into Christ. Leave the first principles in the sense that you lay the foundation and keep building until you finish. Glory to God, there is a reality that answers to the ideal God has put into our thought! Let us go on to perfection.

In traveling we meet sweet surprises. The Christian life is a new life forever. Every stage of it has its own peculiar charm. It looks forward, not backward. Forgetting the things that are behind, it reaches for the things that are ahead, and presses forward, stretching every nerve. Forward, forward, forward!

SPIRITUAL GYMNASTICS.

TEXT: “Exercise thyself unto godliness.” (1 Tim. iv. 7.)

SPIRITUAL GYMNASTICS.

THE Greek may be rendered, *Gymnastize thyself unto godliness.* Spiritual gymnastics is my theme to-day. The apostle Paul contrasts physical with spiritual culture—not undervaluing the one, but duly magnifying the other. Bodily exercise profits a little, he says. The body must be cared for. Christianity is the religion of the body as well as of the soul. In both his body and spirit is the believer to glorify God. Christianity is the religion of manliness, of the truest courage and the highest chivalry. It is not a morbid and gloomy asceticism, nor a namby-pamby sentimentality. Its sainthood is not necessarily weak-chested and flabby-muscled, though there are true saints of that type. If there ever was a manly saint, the author of this text was one. He was of truest heroic metal. If he had not been the chiefest of the apostles, he would have been the first soldier of his age. Had he not been commissioned to lift up the cross of Christ to the world, he would have unfurled Israel's conquered banner and borne it in triumph to the very gates of Cæsar's palace, or perished in the attempt. He kept his body under, as every man ought to do, but the labors that he performed and the sufferings he endured demonstrated that he possessed a physical organization of extraordinary vigor and elasticity. The bodily infirmities of which he speaks in his epistles were probably those which belonged to the sensitive organism of a man of genius. He knew much of pain, but not of weakness. He had his thorn in the flesh, but with it an

energy unsurpassed in the history of mankind. Had he lived in our day, he would have been no enemy to the gymnasium, or to the college boating club, or to any of the means of judicious physical culture with which the youth of this generation are favored. He loved the society of young men, and would have been a delightful companion on a hunting or fishing party or a vacation tramp with a class in geology or engineering. It is well to have a good physical basis for the making of a hero. The man who said long ago that he had a brave heart, but cowardly legs, may have spoken the exact truth. Just think of one item in the life of Paul: on five different occasions he received thirty-nine lashes on his bared back. I never realized what a scourging of this sort was until last winter, when in the wondrously beautiful church of Las Mercedes in Havana I saw a painting of the scourging of our Lord before Pilate. It was terribly realistic. Thirty-nine lashes from a Roman lictor was a species of gymnastics which the subject thereof would never wish to have encored. The nerves of St. Paul stood this test five times, nor did they fail him before the judgment seat of Agrippa, nor on Mars' Hill, nor when the Roman headsman, ax in hand, came to give him his martyr passport to paradise. Paul's body was trained by the Greeks; his intellect by Gamaliel, the great rabbi; his heart by Jesus. His Grecian training was part of his equipment for his great work. I think it probable that he was an expert gymnast. In the Greek gymnasium in his boyhood and youth he acquired the taste for these things that so often flashes forth in his epistles. It is evident that he knew the rules of the Olympian and Isthmian games. When I was a schoolboy, we had no scientific physical culture such as we have now, but a country boy did

not lack exercise. His gymnastics were home-made and various—horseback riding, chopping with an ax or hoe, plowing, grubbing, fishing, hunting, climbing, swimming, and sometimes dancing when the father or the schoolmaster made the music with a gum or hickory switch. We did not lack exercise in those old days, and the most of us had good appetites, firm muscles, slept well, and grew to full weight and stature. Of all these kinds of exercise I liked fishing best, and my boyhood enthusiasm for it is unabated now. Our boys, if so disposed, can find considerable opportunity for exercise even if football and calisthenics should become extinct. There are forests to fell, ditches to dig, orchards to plant, logs to saw, houses to build, railroads to be run. No one needs to suffer for the lack of exercise in this land of bigness and open-air living, to which the stranger comes to make money and where the native stays because he loves it.

But, conceding all that may be justly claimed for physical culture, you will agree with St. Paul that spiritual culture is the main thing to be sought. In the one case the model is a perfect physical organism; in the other it is God himself—God as manifested in Jesus Christ. Physical culture, when pursued for its own sake, and ending in itself, loses its value, and its heroes are of the pattern of the drunken slugger, who is a physical and moral wreck at thirty. Greek culture rotted because it was earthly and sensual and devilish.

Godliness is *Godlikeness*. That is its etymology. Likeness to God, therefore, is the proper object of all culture in this life. This likeness to God is comprehensible and attainable. In Jesus Christ God is manifest in the flesh. In Christ God comes close to us; we hear his voice, we catch

his thought, we feel the throb of his heart, we discover the manner of his working. "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,*" is his own statement of this great truth. God has revealed himself much more fully than is realized even by many believers. It is true that the finite cannot comprehend the Infinite. God is the King eternal, immortal, invisible, dwelling in light that no man can approach unto. His ways are past finding out by us; the scheme of his government is too vast for finite intelligence—the universe its theater and eternity its term. But he has given to man a revelation that he can understand; that revelation is an infallible guide in the attainment of godliness, which is the one supreme object of life. God made man in his own image. Ponder the familiar words—"in his own image." What do they mean? Just what the words imply, namely, that man's nature is a transcript of God's. There is nothing in God that is not in man: the difference is in degree. A moral being possesses intellect, sensibility, and will. In God these attributes are infinite; in man they are finite. A good man resembles God as a beam of light resembles the sun, as a drop of water resembles the ocean. God is the Father of our spirits; we are his children. This relationship explains the incarnation and the atonement. Man is worth saving. All the costly agencies of human redemption find their explanation in the dignity of man's origin, the possibilities of his development, and the grandeur of his destiny. The true object of this life is to recover the image, favor, and life of God. This is the end sought to be attained by the spiritual gymnastics commended by St. Paul to his beloved young friend Timothy in our text, and which I commend to you to-day.

This godliness is not to be attained without ef-

fort. As in physical culture the gymnast must act in coöperative obedience to the laws of nature, so in the exercises that are directed to the attainment of likeness to God there must be conformity to the laws of spiritual life and growth revealed in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These will now claim our consideration.

1. The Bible is the text-book of spiritual gymnastics. It tells us what God is. It tells us what God loves. It tells us what God hates. To despise and neglect the Bible is to despise and neglect its Author. At a certain age young persons are prone to follow the evil fashion set by a class of materialists, affecting the empty profundity of the agnostic and cultivating a proud contempt for religion. A mere smattering of science and a mere smattering of biblical knowledge may make confusion and lead to conflict, but the men who have reverently and deeply studied both rejoice in the perception of a harmony that becomes more manifest as both are more thoroughly understood. This is a disease of youth. Young men and young women sometimes contract this sort of intellectual measles, but recover and do well afterwards. There is no promise of heavenly light to a proud, caving, captious spirit, but the whole heaven of saving truth is revealed to the humility that bows in reverence before the infinite God, the earnestness that avails itself of all proffered helps to its acquisition, and the rational receptivity that gratefully accepts the grace of God in the gospel of his Son. I commend to you, my young friends, this exercise in Bible gymnastics. Make that Book your counselor and guide, and in the study of God in Christ you will acquire that godliness, or likeness to God, which is the goal of your destiny as children of God and heirs of immortality.

2. Godliness implies not only knowledge of God, but union with him. Christianity is the sublimest of all philosophies, whether studied in the perfectly crystallized statement of the fundamental principles of godliness in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount or in the lofty dialectics of the disciple of Gamaliel who after his conversion became its greatest apostle. But it is more than a philosophy: it is a life. And only by knowing it as an experience can you understand it as a philosophy. The method of God in religion is the inductive method. Not Francis Bacon, but Jesus Christ, is the author of the inductive philosophy. The divine order is, *Taste, and see that the Lord is good*. First taste, and then see. Human pride and waywardness would invert the process. One might as well expect to grow strong and fat by reading a cook-book, or to become an expert swimmer by perusing a treatise on the art of swimming. If any man will do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine: thus Jesus Christ himself puts the great truth in the fewest words. Pray, and you shall find that there is a living God who hears and answers prayer; approach Christ in the desire of your heart and the purpose of your will, and you shall find rest to your soul; believe, and you shall have the witness in yourself. In the use of the means of grace you shall find the God of all grace. Everything becomes a channel of grace to the soul that is truly seeking to do the will of God. The conversion of the soul is reached on this line, and on no other: it takes place when your willingness to accept Christ meets his willingness to save you. This is the simple yet sublime act of the soul, the choice of the will, which is the essence of saving faith. Faith is choice—nothing more, nothing less. If you wish to enjoy the beauty and sublimity of

Niagara Falls, you do not content yourself with studying a map of the route thither: you take the road and go to them. The way to Christ and to heaven is plain enough to him who would seek it in God's own way. Christianity is the religion of certainty. The language of its witnesses is, *We know*. They possess a conscious salvation in Jesus Christ. The Spirit itself bears witness with theirs that they are the children of God. This is not the language of a mystic or an enthusiast. It is the language of experience, the language of certainty, the language spoken by an innumerable company of saints who have demonstrated their sincerity by their spotless lives and sealed their testimony with their blood. Because they keep his precepts, the Lord gives to them that which all the philosophies of the world cannot impart—the indubitable, satisfying consciousness that they are the children of God. To decry such an experience because, having neglected the conditions of its attainment, you have not felt it, is illogical, unwise, and suicidal. Rather let me advise you to exercise yourselves most earnestly in this matter, and in the fervent devotions and blessed experiences of Christian discipleship find the demonstration of its truth and the truest and highest blessedness of your being.

3. Godliness implies obedience to God, obedience springing from the love that rules a renewed heart. This love expresses itself in action. If it truly exist, it *will* thus express itself. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," is Christ's own test. Obedience is the test of love. The tree is known by its fruits. Work out your own salvation because it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do: this is the inspired formula, embracing the whole philosophy and practice of genuine

Christianity, a religion of supernatural origin charged with supernatural energy. No other sort of religion can or ought to get a hearing or footing in this age, when all current opinions, institutions, and policies are placed under the lenses of a critical, sifting, changeful generation. Nothing will survive that cannot stand the fire. This nineteenth century will be known in succeeding ages as the winnowing period of the world's history. The chaff is being separated from the wheat, and will be consumed. In the prevalent so-called destructive criticism, though it is often irreverent, unfair, and audacious, there is nothing that should alarm anybody except the deluded pedants who indulge in it. Christianity is in the battle, and will be the victor. The fight is so hot that only the true-hearted and heroic will stand the fire. Let the coward turn and flee; let the selfish and venal assume a cold-blooded neutrality; let the fool who says in his heart there is no God because he has chosen to live a godless life sink into the mere animalism which is the logical outcome of his creed. But I look for better things from you, to whom I commend the godliness which has the promise of both worlds, which develops the whole being, comprehending in its aims, its culture, and its results the true dignity and blessedness of this life and the glory of immortality.

The consummate physical culture of the Greeks enabled them to achieve the conquest of the world by force of arms. But in that splendid development there was a fatal defect: it looked no higher nor farther than the earthly. It made that an end which should have been only a means to a higher end. And so it perished, lacking the unifying, conservative, indestructible element which belongs only to that which is rooted in God, and is in harmony

with the principles and methods by which he governs and guides this world and all worlds in the evolution of his beneficent designs.

In this day we need, in connection with a wise physical culture for the work to be done on the secular plane, spiritual athletes, men and women so developed, drilled, and perfected in the gymnastics of godliness that they shall be able to achieve first the conquest of themselves, and then the conquest of the world for Christ. And whither shall we look for these trained and consecrated men and women if not to the higher institutions of learning which ought to be the consummate flower of our Christian civilization? Physical culture for its own sake ends in the deterioration of the individual and in the demoralization and destruction of nations. Intellectual culture for its own sake bears the same bitter fruit. Its strength becomes weakness, its light darkness. Nothing lives that is not linked to God.

One of the requisites for a foreign missionary prescribed by our Mission Boards is that the candidate shall possess a good physical constitution. This, though it may rule out some who are among the very best of Christ's disciples, is a wise provision, for two reasons: first, that the missionary may be able to do full work and of good quality; and second, that the heathen peoples may see in their Christian teachers fair samples of what Christianity can accomplish in the development of the whole being, body and soul. Sickly saints can find work enough at home.

If you were asked to name the manliest man of this generation of Americans, you would at once think of Robert E. Lee, whose modesty and moderation in victory, fortitude under defeat, and sublime patience under voiceless sorrow found their

crowning grace and glory in his unfaltering faith in God. And what a figure does your little swearing, swaggering cadet exhibit in contrast with Stonewall Jackson, the praying soldier whose name will shine like a ball of fire in the firmament of American history so long as the Potomac cuts its way through the cliffs at Harper's Ferry or the flowers bloom in the Shenandoah Valley.

You will allow me to emphasize in a few closing words the truths suggested by my theme.

This spiritual culture which is commended in the text is not to be acquired without effort. Without toil and pains you can never become a scholar or a soldier. The drill of the academy or the camp must be submitted to in order that the mind may be informed and disciplined, or the muscles trained and hardened. Easy-going indolence and mere spurts of intermittent exertion win no prizes in letters or arms. Genius and mediocrity alike must work for what they get in this world. And does any man or woman before me dream that the prizes of godliness that are infinite in value and eternal in duration are to be won without exertion? Do you think that the knowledge of the highest truths, the realization of the most blessed experiences, and the accomplishment of the grandest achievements in the way of Christian endeavor are to be attained by a life of indolence and indifference? You would resent such an imputation as a slander.

Another truth that I would leave with you I present half reluctantly, lest I should seem in any degree to lower the motive of a true human life. But your own intelligence and candor will properly guard this truth which is submitted to you last of all, namely: that exercise unto godliness is as delightful as it is profitable. Duty is conjoined

with delight. As in physical gymnastics there is awkwardness, and blundering, and mishaps and falls and bruises at the start, but dexterity, gracefulness, and pleasure afterwards, so it is in the spiritual gymnastics whose aim and end are Godlikeness. The law of habit is a law of God that always works for our happiness when we put ourselves in right relation to it. Exercise unto godliness becomes delightful in proportion to the earnestness, regularity, and perseverance with which it is maintained. Prayer, praise, the study of the Holy Scriptures, Christian conversation, and Christian work of whatever kind—all the devotions and all the activities of a Christian life—become more and more delightful as you go forward in the way of duty. By exercise you acquire facility, skill, power, delight. When the soul becomes accustomed to the attitude of reverence, love, and obedience toward God, it is heaven on earth.

THE EXPERIMENTAL TEST.

TEXT: “O taste and see that the Lord is good.” (Ps. xxxiv. 8.)

THE EXPERIMENTAL TEST.

IF misery loves company, so does happiness—especially religious happiness. The command to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, is written not only in the New Testament, but in the heart of every true Christian. A converted man is not only a recipient, but also a dispenser, of the grace of God. Those who freely receive are the ones who freely give. This is the universal law of the kingdom of heaven.

The author of this text was enjoying the greatest of all blessings—the favor of God. He had been in many troubles, and God had delivered him out of them all. He had the victory of faith that turned darkness to light, weakness into strength, and out of the deepest sorrow brought to his trusting soul the highest spiritual blessedness. Thus realizing the goodness of God, he would have everybody to prove and to share the blessing he himself enjoyed. *O taste and see that the Lord is good.* He said in substance: I have found God faithful and gracious, a present help in trouble, a refuge in danger, a light in darkness. My heart is rejoicing in such a sense of his goodness as to make it overflow in a song of thanksgiving and praise. I would not brood over my joy in solitude and silence until it stagnates. I must tell the news. The Lord hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad. Come, and I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my soul. The Lord is good: test his goodness for yourself; taste and see.

To taste and see that the Lord is good is to understand his truth and to receive his grace.

I. This implies that there is a God who can reveal his truth to our minds; that we have minds that can apprehend God as he has revealed himself in his word and in the works of his hands. The idea of God and the worship of God are congenial to the human soul. The soul was made for God. Its longing for God cannot be laughed, sneered, or argued away. The poor heathen feels for God in the dark, and is never satisfied until he has found or invented some representation of him. The idea of God and the disposition to worship him are inherent in human nature. The origin of this idea and this tendency is revealed in the Bible. Man was made in God's image. Man was made for God. Even in its ruins human nature shows marks of its high original. Under the renewing grace of God, the soul of man is capable of the knowledge of God, and may glow with adoration in the contemplation of the perfections of the divine nature. Weak and poor and freakish is that materialistic logic that seeks to prove to us that man was evolved from matter. Why do not the materialists go a step farther in the path of absurdity, and tell us that God himself was thus evolved? If man was latent in matter—if the intellect of Moses, Cæsar, Napoleon, Newton, and Shakespeare, and the moral grandeur and goodness of Washington, were evolved from the primordial cell—why limit this development short of Deity? If protoplasm can give us *Hamlet* and *Faust* and *Paradise Lost*, why may it not also give us the Thunderer of Sinai and the Judge at the resurrection? Materialism does not, cannot satisfy the human soul. It cries out for the living God. The Bible reveals God to our minds. Whosoever contemplates God's glo-

rious perfections in the light of his own revelation in the Bible will find a source of pure and inexhaustible enjoyment. Then taste and see. Search the Scriptures for yourself. You will find in them the very truth you need. The Bible is as many-sided as human nature, and as many-voiced as the breathings of the human soul. In it every man will find the aliment that will nourish his own spirit, the truth that shall make him free, the light that shall guide him safely to God and heaven.

II. But the text implies that we can enjoy an actual experience of God's goodness—which is something more than an intellectual apprehension of the glory of God as he has revealed himself to us in his word and works. Our heavenly Father speaks directly to the soul by his Spirit. The witness is within us.

1. The author of the text prayed, and God heard and answered his prayer. He knew God heard, because he answered. That is prayer—the cry and the answer—a cry on the earth, an answer in heaven. The answer! When a mother comes from the place of her secret devotions with wet eyes and a face that is shining, it is because she got the answer. The patient look on the sufferer's face reveals the fact that the answer of peace has come from the world of unbroken harmonies.

2. There is no real prayer without faith. Faith is the belief of the heart unto righteousness. Faith is the choice of the will.

3. As there can be no true prayer without faith, so there can be no true faith without obedience. With the heart man believeth *unto righteousness*.

4. Love is the fulfilling of the law. Obedience is the fruit and the evidence of love in a believer's soul. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." says our Saviour.

The root, the trunk, the branches, all make one tree. So faith, obedience, and love make one Christian life, whose fruit is unto holiness and the end everlasting life. That which God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

There are many voices in this world that are crying, *Taste and see*. Pleasure presents her poisoned cup to the young and invites the taste. Passion excites many to drink eagerly, and they find death at the bottom. Curiosity prompts many to taste of the forbidden cup. Oh the fatal fascination of the mystery of sin! Unlawful curiosity was the original sin of our first parents, who could not resist the temptation to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The chemists tell us that prussic acid is a deadly poison: it is better that you take their word for it. It is surely unwise for a clean person to roll in the mire to learn how mud feels. Leave it to the swine—the mud of profanity, falsehood, gambling, licentiousness. We all know that fire will burn: do not thrust your hand into the flame to learn how it feels to be burned. Poison kills. Fire burns. Sin destroys. Do you believe it? Survey the moral wrecks all around you. See them in the mire of sin, never to get out. See them consuming in the fires of sin, or coming out scorched and scarred. An unpolluted, unmaimed manhood is a glorious thing. It is a great mercy to get out of the fires of sin, but it is a more blessed thing to keep out. Don't taste sin's poisoned cup. Let not its fire kindle upon your soul. Don't take the first step hellward from curiosity. If you never take the first step, you will never travel that road at all.

There is no risk involved in accepting the challenge of the text. The author of this text is supposed to be David. He was a competent witness.

He had seen life in many phases, and tested his religion under widely varying circumstances. It had hallowed his joys in the days of his prosperity; it had given him fortitude under the pressure of adversity; it had given comfort in the day of sorrow; it had inspired him with the loftiest courage in the hour of danger. He had found it equal to all emergencies. At all times and under all circumstances he had found it to be good. With this experience, and from the holy height of religious joy to which he had attained, he lifts his voice in triumph and invites all the world to the feast where his own soul had been fed with the bread of heaven.

This is the sum of the teaching of this text: *Taste and see that the Lord is good.* Be religious because you can be religious. Pray because your prayer will be heard and answered. Obey God because you can obey, and because your obedience will be acceptable to him. Taste and see. This is the call of God to-day by his word. This is the call of the Holy Spirit speaking in his still small voice to your hearts. This is the voice of the Church. Hear this call to-day. Accept the gracious invitation by beginning the new life. If you are a wanderer from the fold, come back to-day. If you are a disciple of your Lord, take a fresh start *now*.

THE HOLINESS OF GOD'S HOUSE.

TEXT: "Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever."
(Ps. xciii. 5.)

THE HOLINESS OF GOD'S HOUSE.

THE reign of God in creation and providence is the theme of the singer of this short sacred song. Wrapping his attributes about him as royal robes, God rules in this world and all worlds. He is clothed with majesty and strength, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. The visible phenomena of the universe are the insignia of his majesty; the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. These are his vesture, the outbeaming radiance of the all-perfect One, who is God over all, blessed forever: God manifested in nature, shining in the sunlight, uttering his voice in the ocean's mighty diapason, and walking upon the wings of the wind. But these are only parts of his glory: "the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters; yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." His essential, underived power surpasses the most sublime exhibitions of power in nature. He rules the raging of the sea. Every drop of the plunging torrent of Niagara, or of beautiful Yosemite, is measured by his hand. His footsteps are in the great waters, and his paths in the seas. But he is greater than all his works. Behind the visible creation is the infinite Creator himself. Higher than the heavens is the Maker of heaven and earth. He is the living God, ruling in the armies of heaven and among the children of men. His years shall have no end, and his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. He is almighty and everlasting, infinite in might and majesty. Therefore holiness becometh his house forever

This is the argument presented in the Psalm which I have chosen for this service. With ample Scripture warrant for so doing, I propose to consider the word "house" in a threefold sense on this occasion of the dedication of this new house of worship.

Holiness becometh the house itself. This building is God's house in a peculiar sense. To-day it is to be dedicated, to be "set apart from all unhallowed and common uses to the worship of Almighty God, for the reading and expounding of his holy word, the administration of his ordinances, and for all other acts of religious worship." The congregation will join in the prayer that the name of God may be recorded in this place, and that here his honor may dwell. This is God's house, to be set apart for the most important and sacred uses. We need such sacred places here on earth. There is so much that is discordant, distasteful, and distracting that we long for respite from the commonplace and the secular. From the sights and sounds of a world marred and untuned by sin, we need a sanctuary, a retreat where we can be quiet, where we can breathe a purer air, and hold communion with the unseen and eternal. In our cities it seems to me this need must be more strongly felt. In the country the glorious temple of the universe is open to the worshiper. I have stood on a calm, clear day in the holy silence of the giant Calaveras forest in California; I have stood on the beach of the mighty Pacific where, beyond the Golden Gate, stretches mile after mile of white beach, and gazed upon the great breakers as they came rolling in upon the shore; I have stood upon the Point of Lookout Mountain and gazed upon the wonderful scene that lay beneath and around me, embracing mountain and river, city and forest; I have stood

awe-struck before the cataract of Niagara, and felt the delirium that seizes the soul while drinking in the swirling, surging terror of the whirlpool below; I have stood on the summit of the range that shuts out Clear Lake from the sea, and looked upon the scene of indescribable beauty and grandeur spread out before me—and amid these scenes of beauty and sublimity, I have felt as if I were in the very presence of God, their creator, and my soul has sunk into the depths of adoring love and risen to the heights of rapturous worship. But in the man-made city we need the help of beautiful, well-appointed houses of worship. The costliest building ever erected was the temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, every part of which, even to the minutest detail, was according to a plan and specifications prescribed by God himself. The highest use to which a house made by human hands can be put is the worship of God. When the members of a congregation are rich enough to build costly and beautiful dwellings for themselves, it is proper that they should not grudge a liberal expenditure for the house of the Lord. But it has been one of the glories of our Methodism that it has been more solicitous to provide neat and comfortable places of worship for the many than to build costly edifices for the few. We are still moving on that line, and will be for another hundred years, I trust. Methodism will enter into no æsthetical rivalry with other Churches while the unhoused, dying millions are starving for the bread of life. She will see to it that the poor have the gospel preached to them; and this will be her glory until she becomes an apostate Church. But we are able now to build good churches, and it is our duty to do so. We must not confound beauty with holiness, but they are not antagonistic. This building is holy. Its walls, its

towers, its pulpit, its chancel, its pews, its roof, its floor upon which we kneel in prayer—all, all are holy.

Holiness becometh the worship. Mark the expression, *the worship*. You come here to worship God, not to worship a preacher. You come here to worship God, not to admire musical genius. You come here to worship God, not for mere social contact or intellectual or æsthetic enjoyment.

Holiness becometh all parts of the worship. 1. The preaching should look to holiness as its end. It should magnify holiness as an attribute of God, and insist with solemn earnestness on all that is implied in man's relation to such a Being. Pulpit levity, pulpit slang, pulpit coarseness, pulpit irreverence of every sort, is condemned by this text. The preacher stands in this sacred place as the ambassador of Jesus Christ. He may not disgrace his Master. He must deliver his message in a manner worthy of Him who hath sent him. He stands here as a watchman, and he must be faithful. No trifling can be proper in this sacred place. He stands here as an exponent of divine truth, and he must not adulterate that truth. He stands here before those whom he will meet at the judgment seat of Christ, and he must not shun to declare to them the whole counsel of God. 2. Holiness becometh the music. The music is an important part of the worship. Put worship into every note, or be silent. Sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also—this is the order. The spirit is put first. That is essential. Sing hymns, not ditties; sing hymns, not doggerel; sing hymns, not operas; sing hymns, not vapid sentimentalities; sing hymns, not abstract poems or didactic essays in verse; sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also. 3. Holiness becometh the

prayers made in God's house. An indispensable element of true prayer is a sense of the Divine presence. The Divine presence—what does it mean? Stop and think. Not in bodily form, not in visible symbols, but really God is present in his temple. When we speak to him, shall it be with rambling thought and indifference of spirit? 4. Holiness becometh the attitude of the worshipers in God's house. It is a beautiful custom, still kept up in some places, on entering the house of God to kneel or bow the head a few moments in silent prayer. The effect of such a custom can be only good upon the worshiper himself. It would help the irreligious to remember that they are in the house of God. Why so many Christian men and women fail to kneel during prayer, I do not know. It is conceded that the attitude is not essential. You may make an acceptable prayer standing, sitting, or kneeling, if the attitude of the soul toward God be that of humility and trust. But something is due to order and decency in the house of God. If a few kneel and others sit bolt upright staring around, while others compromise by bending forward a little, the effect is not good. It has the appearance of confusion and irreverence. There is room enough in these pews for men and women to kneel. Why not be uniform in our attitude in prayer? The time is coming when every knee *must* bow. Shall we wait until then? The kneeling position is not unpleasant when you get used to it. The moment you take this attitude, you feel more like praying. It is nature's own posture for supplication. It is scriptural, it is helpful, it is becoming.

Holiness becometh the worshipers themselves. Beautiful churches, eloquent preachers, artistic music, kneeling multitudes, are vain and useless unless the worshipers themselves are recipients of sav-

ing grace. Personal holiness is the objective point in all Church work and worship. The one essential beauty is the beauty of holiness. What is a beautiful house, with all the outward paraphernalia of outward worship, if the hearts of the worshipers are black and ugly with sin? The one purpose in the founding of the Church of Christ is to make men holy. For this Jesus died, for this he intercedes, for this the Holy Spirit is given, for this the gospel is preached, for this alone the Church lives and works. What means the dedication of a house where there is no dedication of hearts to God? You, brethren and sisters, are yourselves the temples of the Holy Ghost. If to defile this material building with sinful or irreverent behavior, or to defile it in any way, is repugnant to decency, what is it to defile that house which is the temple of the Holy Ghost? All that has been expended on this house in money, in prayer, in toil, in self-denial, what does it all amount to if you are to be a worldly, ease-loving, unspiritual people? God save you from such a dreadful anticlimax and failure as that would be!

Holiness becometh that house in which there is an indwelling Christ. The curious visitor will gaze at the stained windows, the frescoed ceiling, the Brussels carpet, and the beautiful furniture, but God looks at your hearts. What does he see there? This is the question of all questions for each one of you this dedication day. Spirit of searching, burn this question into every soul now! This holiness of which I have spoken is the holiness of a regenerated nature; the holiness of right religious habits; the holiness that is likeness to Christ; a holiness that abides in Christ as a living branch abides in the living vine; a holiness that means a new heart and a new life forever.

Forever! that is the word of sweetness and power in this text. We aspire for what is lasting as well as for what is beautiful and holy. We yearn for a beauty that will not fade, a blessedness that will not perish. We are hastening on to the world of spirits, where our companionship will be with holy beings forever. Let us get ready for that high companionship, of which the risen and glorified Christ is the center and the joy. When you go up from this church to join them, you will not be strangers. Up there, shining in the light of God, and waiting for you, are the true-hearted and loving ones who once walked with you here. They toiled and wept and worshiped with us here; we will worship with them yonder, where toil and pain and grief are unknown. Let us make the worship here as much like that yonder as we can. The elements of true worship are the same here and there, and the raptures of heaven are but the full consummation of the blessedness of holiness here.

Forever! This house will last a long time, for it is solid and strong. But it will perish. Not a stone or brick or timber will be left. Its very site may be lost. But *you* shall live forever. The salvation of one soul is a greater thing than the building of a thousand cathedrals.

Forever! Holiness yonder means holiness here. Holiness forever means holiness now. Holiness now is the command of God. Holiness now is the blessed possibility of each one of us. Holiness now is the certain attainment of all who seek it with their whole hearts. Holiness now is the initial movement that leads to holiness forever. Holiness forever is blessedness forever.

THE PREACHER AND WHAT HE
PREACHES.

TEXT: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine: continue in them; for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. iv. 16.)

THE PREACHER AND WHAT HE PREACHES.

THAT is the beginning—let the preacher begin with himself. His call to preach means at least the salvation of one man, and that man himself. Take heed unto yourself.

There are peculiar blessings and helps in the work of a preacher, and also peculiar trials and temptations. Failure on the part of a preacher will be awful beyond that of other men. And his failure involves the ruin of others. An apostate or unfaithful preacher takes a place that a better man might fill. He is a cumberer of the ground. The light that ought to be in him being darkness, dense indeed is that darkness. He makes men doubt not only himself, but the truth of the gospel he preaches. Unfaithful preachers do more to promote infidelity than an army of open infidels. Take heed unto thyself. Be sure you are right with regard to the main points of a genuine religious experience.

I. Be sure that you are a converted man. (1) How can a man preach repentance who has never repented of his own sins? (2) How can a man preach salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who has never exercised saving faith? (3) How can a man preach pardon and peace who has never felt the absolving touch of the Lord? (4) How can a man preach the witness of the Holy Ghost who has never felt in his own soul that witnessing Spirit that gives certitude to the fact that he is a child of God?

Mark you, take heed unto yourself now, remembering that the question is not whether you have

had these experiences in your past lives, but what is your state *now*. A backslidden preacher is no uncommon spectacle, but is there a sadder one on earth? Take up the Minutes of our Annual Conferences for the last thirty years, and you will find name after name of preachers who fell into sin and were ruined. God pity them! The sight of their printed names suggests tragedies more terrible than ever poet invented. Their names are seldom spoken, and then only in suppressed whispers, in the circles where they once shone as burning lights in the Church of Christ. Believe it, my brethren, a man may backslide in the ministry and go from the pulpit and the altars of the sanctuary down to hell. Believe it, my younger brethren, that if you are not more watchful and devout than other men, you will be worse than other men. Your responsibilities are weightier; your temptations are greater. If Satan can smite with blindness or deafness the shepherds of the flock, it will be easy to scatter the sheep. There are dangers in your path—dangers peculiar to your high vocation. What are these dangers? You will find out what they are by the time your locks are as white as mine. What are the dangers that specially beset preachers?

1. One danger is *perfunctoriness*. Unless he be on his guard, taking close heed unto himself, a preacher may fall into this error before he is aware of it. He is in danger of becoming a mere maker and reciter of sermons, instead of a messenger of his Lord proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation with a heart of love and a tongue of fire. The perfunctory preacher—you have heard him. He may be as correct as the multiplication table, but he is as dry as a coffee mill and not half as useful.

2. Take heed unto yourself, and watch and pray

against vanity. If I were asked what is the easily besetting weakness of preachers, I would answer that it is vanity. Preachers are usually warm-hearted men who love to be loved and appreciated. They wish to obtain access to the minds and hearts of their hearers for their message of salvation. If they are not watchful and prayful, the personal element will insinuate itself into their motives and methods before they are aware of it. (Let him that is innocent in this matter cast the first stone at the rest of us.) The insidiousness is in the fact that it is assumed and admitted generally that a preacher's usefulness is largely dependent on his acceptability and popularity. This being so, what more natural than that he shall take pains to make himself acceptable and popular? Acceptable and popular! There is honey and deceit in the phrase. Take heed unto yourself along here! Before you know it, you are in danger of becoming all things to all men in a sinister sense never meant by the apostle—not that you may save them that hear you, but that you may exalt yourself. When that sort of self-seeking comes in, it brings along with it the two ugliest snakes in all the writhing mass of evils that coil themselves in the natural heart—envy and jealousy. Envy is the meanest passion of the human soul—"a passion," says Lord Bacon, "that has no holidays, a fire that always rages." The man who gets what you expected to get, the man who seems to block your upward movement—does a shadow pass over your face at the mention of his name? Envy and jealousy got into the hearts of the Twelve in the very presence of Jesus; and you remember his gentle reproof given by setting a little child in their midst and pointing to it as the true type of his kingdom, which was not of this world. O Jesus, set the little child in the midst of thy

Church to-day! Rewrite upon all our hearts by the Holy Spirit that service and sacrifice, not honor and lordship, are the badges of distinction in that kingdom of heaven which is not meat and drink, nor anything that is earthly, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

3. Take heed unto yourself with regard to the manner in which you manage money matters and secular affairs in general—especially in the matter of the payment of debts. The disclosures of the judgment day will uncover histories unspeakably pathetic and tragic of the true men who bore humiliations worse than death in this connection. The true men who are the victims of pecuniary misfortune deserve only our sympathy and compassion. But there are preachers who are notoriously loose in their notions and practice in money matters. Many have been wrecked on this rock.

It is hard to say whether it is worse for a preacher to be careless and slipshod and untrustworthy in business matters, as some are, on the one hand, or to be secular, sharp, and money-grabbing on the other. God deliver the Church from both classes—the lazy, careless preacher without business sense or conscience, and the money-loving, money-grasping creature who carries the heart of a Simon Magus under the mantle of an apostle of Jesus Christ! The Church has suffered much from both sorts. We hang our heads in shame because it is so.

But let it be said just here that Methodism has a record on this line as heroic as any to be found in the annals of the Church of Christ. One of our preachers in California in the early days subsisted alone on crackers and water rather than go in debt. He grew thinner and still thinner from

week to week. The facts in the case somehow leaked out by accident, and the big-hearted miners, realizing that they had a genuine hero in their midst, would have divided with him their last ration. There are men to-day in our border work and on hard circuits nearer to us who are making records as heroic as that of St. Paul, who supported himself by his own labor rather than risk even the appearance of a mercenary spirit among an untaught and untrained people. "These hands," he said, "have ministered to my necessities." Necessities was the word. Necessities were all that he could procure, and all that he wanted. He ate fewer big dinners than some of his successors. And he visited more jails and more sick-beds. He was an unmarried preacher: it took little to support him, and that little he earned by his own toil. A man who is too lazy or too stupid to make a living for himself in some secular business will not make a successful preacher. Read the passage in Acts xx. and you will see that St. Paul not only supported himself, but his assistants, them that were with him: possibly they were young preachers in their undergraduate course who put in all their time in their studies, that they might become master workmen, rightly dividing the word of truth—that is, to preach it logically, systematically, clearly, successfully.

But few of our preachers now follow St. Paul's example with regard to marriage. The rule is, that they marry, following Peter, who had both a wife and a mother-in-law, though his assumed successors at Rome have neither.

A good wife helps a preacher. An unsuitable wife is a millstone around a preacher's neck. We have seen both sorts. The sort last named needs no description from me: they have been described

thousands of times by interested parties or persons of critical spirit both in the Church and out of it. But the other sort—God bless them! the flowers of paradise have bloomed in their tracks from the Epworth parsonage at Oxford in old England, where John Wesley's mother reared nineteen children and helped to run the parish, down to this hour when a thousand Methodist preachers' wives are making the wilderness places to blossom—practicing economies that seem almost miraculous and self-denials that redeem this half-skeptical and sensuous generation from the imputation of a gross materialism that scoffs at heroism and saintliness. God bless them! Their names do not go into the Minutes in elaborate biographies, but they are written in the book of God. Take heed along here, my young brethren. Do not be in a hurry to marry. A young man studying law or medicine or learning a trade usually waits until he gets through before he takes a wife. Wait until your beards be grown and you have proved yourselves workmen that need not be ashamed. Don't marry too soon. Be sure to marry the right woman. How can you know who the right woman is? A young preacher in Georgia said to me he knew it was God's will that he should marry a certain young woman. "How do you know it?" I asked. "Because he wouldn't let me love her as I do, if it was not his will that I should marry her," he replied. He didn't marry her: she chose another man, and he waited and did better some time afterwards. Take heed and beware of that sort of logic. It has tied a millstone around many a ministerial simpleton's neck. If God has anything to do with a preacher's life, he surely is not unconcerned about this matter of marriage. Take heed that your motives and action concerning it are such

that when you stand before the bridal altar you will have the inward testimony of a good conscience, and the presence and benediction of the heavenly Bridegroom, the blessed Christ.

II. In the second place, take heed unto the doctrine. Two things are pretty certain with reference to preachers in this connection:

First. When a preacher begins to unravel in his adherence to the fundamental doctrines of evangelical Christianity, he is likely to keep on unraveling until he goes all to pieces.

Second. When a preacher begins to go to pieces in doctrine, a process of deterioration usually begins in his spiritual life.

What are the fundamentals of Christian doctrine? 1. The divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. The atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. 3. The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. 4. The witness of the Holy Spirit with the spirit of a believer that he is a child of God by spiritual birth and adoption. These are the four corner stones of the structure of Christian doctrine. Remove any one of them, and the whole building will fall. Take heed unto the doctrine. *The doctrine*, mind you—not your whims or fads or crotchets, not disputed points of secondary importance, nor the disputations that arise from vain attempts to vivisect the Christian life. *The doctrine*, mind you: not your speculations, nor those of any other man, however learned or plausible.

Never cease to be a student. “Study to show thyself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Make new sermons. Put the new wine into new bottles. At the Missouri Conference all the preachers agreed to begin the new Conference year with a new sermon from a new text—presiding elders and all.

One presiding elder wrote to me saying that he had thus begun the new year, and that the leading merchant of the town was converted while he was preaching that new sermon from the new text.

The fundamental doctrines are inseparably correlated with the vital facts of the gospel. The divinity, atonement, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the witness of the Holy Spirit to the believer's sonship with God, are facts proved by satisfactory testimony from the word of truth, and also certified to the consciousness of every person who exercises true faith in the present tense. We know that Jesus is divine: we know that he is the propitiation for our sins; we know that he has risen from the dead; we know that he has given the witness of the Spirit, because we have the witness in ourselves. On this ground we have certainty. Here let us stand heart to heart, shoulder to shoulder. Let us get the full baptism of the Spirit, and keep it. A well man does not spend his time in studying his symptoms, but expends his energies in doing his work. A healthy boy hardly knows that he has any stomach, lungs, liver, or kidneys. He is physically sound and happy in the normal action of his bodily functions. So with the child of God: born into the new life, happy in the activities and devotions of practical religion, he goes on his way rejoicing, his thankful heart overflowing with the fullness of that life which Jesus gave, and gives more abundantly to them that hunger and thirst. They shall be filled. O Master, fill us to-day. O river of God, flow into our souls now!

A SUCCESSFUL MAN'S TESTIMONY

TEXT: "I understand more than the ancients, because I
keep thy precepts." (Ps. cxix. 100.)

A SUCCESSFUL MAN'S TESTIMONY

THE authorship of this text has been ascribed to two extraordinary men—David and Daniel. It is worthy of either. It is the language of experience; and whether David or Daniel be the author, it is the experience of a man who had thought deeply on the grandest themes, and had surveyed human life and destiny from the very summit of advantageous opportunity. Reading, study, experience, and inspiration give weight and value to this “wise saying of old.” It was the testimony of a successful man, as God and wise men measure success—success, not so much in the immortal fame that he won by his genius, earthly wisdom, or valor, but the highest success in the attainment of character—the acquisition of the imperishable riches of the soul. Let us see what were the means by which this success was achieved, this character attained.

1. *He loved the Bible, the law of God.* He made it the subject of reverent and constant study. This is what raised him above the dead level. He found time to read this sacred book in the midst of the cares of official position, the rush of public life, and the excitements of the court. There is no reading that tones up and expands the mind like the Bible. The student who is too busy to read the Bible is not the one who is most likely to be at the head of the class. The greatest intellects of the world have kindled their genius at the altar of inspired truth. The Bible-reading nations lead the thought of the world to-day. The Bible is the torch of civilization as well as the lamp that lights the path to immortality.

2. *He studied the Bible not as a revelation of abstract truth, but as a practical rule of life.* There is pleasure and profit in the study of truth in the abstract. There is no field of thought so broad as that presented to the student of the Bible. Life, death, heaven, hell, eternity, God—these are the mighty themes of this Book of books, the study of which expands the mind, exalts the imagination, and ravishes the reverent soul with the beauty of truth in its grandest principles and most far-reaching relations. But the boast of the text is not made on this account. The author claimed that he was wiser than his enemies; that he had more understanding than all his teachers; that he understood more than the ancients. Why? Because of superior native intellectual endowments? Because of superior advantages for investigation of these sublime and important truths? No: it often happens that the richest gifts of God in the way of intellectual endowment are thrown away by indolent or vicious living. The largest opportunities are often neglected. Was it because of special inspiration? No: this is not the basis of the claim to superior understanding. Doubtless he was inspired, but behind the inspiration lay another fact. When God inspires a man, it is because there is a man to inspire. Inspiration itself has its laws. The youthful Saul, with his heroic heart and heavenward aspirations, prophesied under the divine afflatus among the prophets of God. But when power had corrupted his soul, and his once modest and generous nature had become envious, selfish, and cruel, in vain did he inquire of the Lord. For him there was no revelation of love—no way of approach was open to his darkened and corrupted heart; the beams of truth could no longer reach him, and he must await the retributive lightning

that blasts and destroys. Inspiration must have a medium, and conform to law. Young man, if you would have Daniel's inspiration, you must reverence Daniel's God and obey his word. Inspiration? Who talks of inspiration now? Who talks of inspiration under this reign of materialism? Who talks of inspiration now when they tell us that Science is going to dethrone the Almighty, extinguish the soul, overthrow the Bible, and set up the new gods of Evolution, Necessity, and what not, in their place? Inspiration! I am bold enough to speak the word. The world is full of it. Its gales blow upon every soul that is ready for its divine touch. Its light shines upon every soul that is looking toward God with reverence and trust. It prophesies from ten thousand living pulpits. It sings the sweetest songs that charm the ear of the world. It glows in the grandest thoughts that brighten the printed page of to-day. It strengthens, ennobles, and illumines the elect souls who are fighting the battles of the Lord in all the earth. Amid the clangor of machinery, the screaming of steam whistles, and the roar of great commercial cities, its voice is heard from lips touched with the hallowed fire, its power felt in hearts tuned to the melodies of heaven. "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding."

We are ready now to answer the question, What was it that raised the author of this text above his contemporaries in knowledge and in character? The emphasis laid on one word gives the answer: "I *keep* thy precepts." The great reward is not in knowing but in keeping the commandments of God. Nay, more, this highest knowledge is attainable only by the reverent, the humble, and the obedient. This is the key that unlocks the

treasury of divine truth. We may understand something of the omnipotence, the omniscience, and the omnipresence of God by the mere intellectual apprehension of his attributes; but there are phases of the divine character, methods of his dealing, that can be understood only by experience. The neophyte must enter at the straight gate of humility and work his way onward from one degree to another in the path of duty. The humblest, most unlettered Christian understands some things which are never disclosed to the wisdom of this world. The best and deepest truth is never revealed to curiosity, nor to indifference, nor to pride. These quench its holy beams in the darkness of the carnal heart. Religious truth is not a matter of speculation: it is an experience. It is a practical thing, just as practical as the learning of a lesson, or the raising of a crop by proper cultivation of the soil. The beauty of this truth is in this: that it opens the door to all. The attainment of the truth that blesses, refines, exalts, saves, does not depend upon genius, learning, leisure, wealth. It is not bought with money, nor can it be won as the prize of intellectual superiority. Like bread, water, air, sunshine, this truth is for all men. It is a good thing to possess learning. God gave us inquisitive and acquisitive minds, and presented the earth and the universe as a field for our investigation. Let us dig down into the depths of geology; let us soar from world to world with the astronomer, measuring them with the line of the mathematician; let us trace the subtle beauties of language in all the tongues in which human thought has found expression; and what does it amount to if it leads to nothing beyond itself? The idolatry of knowledge is just as bad as the idolatry of money. The man who hoards

books just for the pleasure of owning them or for the selfish use of them is just as poor and mean a miser in the sight of God as the man who devotes his life to the hoarding and counting of coin. The acquisition of knowledge for its own sake is the idolatry that curses and withers the life of all who practice it. And what are all these things in themselves? Roads that lead nowhere; ladders that touch the earth, but not the skies; movement in an endless circle; vanity, vanity, all vanity. This was the conclusion of the man who was of all men best qualified to express an opinion on this point. He had genius, power, learning above all men, and they brought him only weariness, disgust, and despair, until he learned that the conclusion of the whole matter was to fear God and keep his commandments. By this *obedience to God* we obtain the pardon of sin, and the knowledge of it; the peace of God, and the knowledge of it; the love of God, and the knowledge of it. These things are known only to experience. They can be known in no other way. "He that will do God's will shall know of the doctrine." You cannot have a clear perception of spiritual truth until you have incorporated it into your life. There was a young lady who had been blind from her infancy. A famous oculist, after examination of her eyes, expressed the opinion that an operation might result in giving her sight. Accordingly the operation was performed, after which the girl was kept in a darkened room with bandaged eyes. After a few days had elapsed, the bandage over the eyes was removed little by little, and the shutters or curtains adjusted so as to let in a faint glimmer of light. From day to day the bandage was lifted a little more, and the light increased gradually and cautiously, until, all being ready,

the blinds were thrown wide open, and the beauty of a spring landscape, with hill and dale, brook and vale, trees and flowers, burst upon her delighted gaze. So the soul, in its pursuit of the divine truth, often finds the first awakening painful; it gropes in darkness amid tears and sorrow, doubt and fear. It goes on obeying God as best it can, feeling after him if haply it may find him, the light increasing day by day, until by a full surrender to the Master, by a vigorous act of the will in choosing Christ, the windows of heaven are opened and the believing soul is flooded with the light and liberty of the children of God. This blessing never fails to come to all who seek God with the whole heart. The path of the just shines more and more—the speculations of the abstractionists do not shine at all. If we would know, we must do. If you would know the flavor of an orange, you must taste it for yourself. If you would know what color is, you must see. One who has never seen, by a mere description could not tell the difference in color between a rainbow and a cloud. The soul can no more be satisfied by the contemplation of abstract truth than a hungry man can be satisfied by reading a description of a good dinner. By the practice of holiness, holiness is strengthened and confirmed.

God's word when thus kept gives power over error and evil. *I have refrained my feet from every evil way:* *I have not departed from thy judgments:* *I hate every false way.*

This sort of practical religion is delightful. Sweeter than honey to the mouth are the words of God to him who walks daily in their light. This is the testimony of a great and good man. Bible religion is happy religion. Make it yours this day by giving your heart and life to Christ.

THE SUFFERER'S SECRET.

TEXT: "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me." (2 Cor. xii. 7.)

THE SUFFERER'S SECRET.

IT is remarkable that this wonderful event in the history of the man of God should not have been mentioned by him for fourteen years after it had taken place. When he did reveal it, his object was not to glorify himself, but to vindicate his apostolic authority against certain false teachers who were aspersing his character, disturbing the Church, and leading the people into error. His object was not to exalt himself, but his divine Lord and Master, whose grace was sufficient for him.

He speaks solemnly, as if he were conscious that he was treading on holy ground while lifting the veil which had hidden from the world the sublime revelation vouchsafed to him.

Though Paul had never before mentioned this vision and its accompanying revelations, we cannot doubt that the glorious truths taught by him were communicated at least in part while he was in paradise. In these very epistles he tells that which he could never have known save by a special revelation from God the Lord.

It is not strange that this man put a low estimate upon the things of this world in comparison with the things that are above. He had been in paradise: he had seen its sights and heard its sounds. It is therefore not surprising that he says: "This one thing I do; forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are before, I press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Forward he pressed; and no wonder, after he had gotten that glimpse of the glory that excelleth. The true faith of a true disciple, whosoever it

may be—you, even you, my fellow-pilgrim—truly gets a glimpse within the veil, and realizes in a blessed sense the substance of things hoped for. This secret of the Lord is for whosoever will claim it. The backward look of the backslider in life or in heart is not for such.

It is evident that the holy apostle had been in danger from spiritual pride—a sin from which the most wonderful revelations and blessed experiences furnish no security. Every blessing, every endowment brings corresponding danger from perversion or non-improvement. Probation here on earth means—probation, neither more nor less.

Therefore God sends Paul a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet him. Whatever this thorn in the flesh was, the apostle recognized it as providential, sent for his good.

He prayed thrice—and got the answer. That is the true faith that prays until the answer comes. Behind every true prayer there is a promise; behind every promise is God. There is no provision for doubt in this gospel of his grace.

The answer to his prayer did not come as the apostle expected. He prayed for rest, but the Lord sent grace. Grace is best of all.

And this is the lesson for us: Infirmities, afflictions, and sorrows are better than visions or revelations, because by these he was drawn nearer to Christ and made to feel more of his presence and power. In this school of trouble he learned to be humble; he learned his dependence upon Christ; he learned to rejoice in tribulation—a different thing from merely enduring tribulation. The elect sufferer whose eye rests on these closing words will understand.

WHAT METHODISM STANDS FOR TO-DAY.

TEXT: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,
that we are the children of God." (Rom. viii. 16.)

"Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit." (Matt. vii. 17.)

WHAT METHODISM STANDS FOR TO-DAY

[Notes of a Sermon at Tremont Church, Boston, August 15, 1895.]

THESE two passages of Scripture tell what Methodism stands for to-day. We use the present tense in speaking of a living organism whose best work is yet to be done. It stands for a religion of certainty—demonstrated Christianity. This demonstration is both subjective and objective, and it is the very thing which the hungry heart and eager brain of this generation demand.

I. Methodism stands to-day for the affirmation of the supernatural element in religious experience, Christianity demonstrated subjectively. This is the religion of the Bible. It is affirmed in the passage I have quoted from St. Paul. John Wesley did not invent this doctrine of the witness of the Spirit. He was the providential agent for its revival in a time of spiritual dearth and darkness. The kingdom of heaven is within you, and it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is a conscious salvation by faith. Conviction of sin, the sense of guilt and of need, the exercise of faith—this is the order. The final act in the gracious process is the exercise of saving faith. What is this faith? It is the choice of the will in the present tense—choice in the present tense, acceptance in the present tense—choice on our own part, acceptance on God's part. This conjunction of choice and acceptance brings conscious salvation. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit—we know. This language is not strange to the ears of

Boston Methodists. If it were so, the time has fully come for some spiritual descendant of Jesse Lee to proclaim anew on Boston Common the gospel of a present, free, full, conscious salvation. This is our blessed old gospel that never loses its freshness and power. Whenever and wherever there is somebody at hand to preach it and to live it, it will prove itself, carrying its own demonstration to every soul that tests it. One breath of the Holy Spirit like that which fell upon the ten thousand Epworth Leaguers at Chattanooga sweeps away the negations of unbelief and the guessings of the self-styled higher critics as the sea mists are driven before an Atlantic gale. What we have to fear in this our day is not the so-called higher criticism, but the lower Methodism which retains the form, but has lost the power, of godliness.

The people called Methodists, as well as others, should beware of cant. The use of the phraseology that expresses the fervor of genuine religious experience by those who have never known it personally is cant, cant that grieves the Holy Spirit and repels from the altars of the Church the weary, hungry souls of men. Not the cold, dead cinders of stereotyped formalism, but the live coal fresh from the altar, the present baptism from on high that gives the heart of love and tongue of flame now. Now! Yes, now; for this true life of the Lord is new life in the Lord forever. Let us catch now, in this service, the spirit of the Ninety-eighth Psalm, and sing unto the Lord a new song. Let our song be a new song of thanksgiving for mercies that are new every day, for larger disclosures of truth, for holier aspirations, for larger opportunities, and for diviner joys, as we go on in this new life which is new forever. Some of us may sing in the minor key, but the song may be none the less new or

sweet on that account. The Holy Spirit makes the divinest music from the sighing of these "bruised reeds," these sorrowing hearts. With a meaning and an emphasis all their own they can say: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Then, under the gracious touch of the self-same Spirit, their song will swell into the higher key with the apostle: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. . . . Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." And then, swelling into a still higher note, they join in the doxology of the apostle: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is the victory that overcometh the world. This is the conscious salvation—present, free, and full—to which as Methodists we are witnesses. Let us *all* join in singing a new song this day.

Let those refuse to sing
Who never knew our Lord,
But children of the heavenly King
May speak their joys abroad.

We will, we must sing out this new song. This sad, sad world is waiting to catch the melody. And the only way for us to keep the tune is to sing it out.

II. Methodism stands for Christianity objectively

demonstrated. Christianity is a good tree, known by its fruits. Christianity is outwardly represented to the world by the Church. The Church—I emphasize the definite article, *the* Church. In the deepest sense of the word there is but one Church of Christ. One is enough. Its present divided state is abnormal and transient. How its promised unity is to come, God knoweth. It will not come by physical compulsion. It will not come by the surrender of soul liberty. All that truly hold to Christ, the Head, belong to his Church. We may leave to him the definition of the limits of this statement. There are some who seem to have more of the Divine Christ in their lives than in their creed; and, conversely, there are others who seem to have more of sound theology in their heads than of the spirit of Christ in their lives.

Leaving our Lord himself to define the limits of his own Church, I may be permitted in this presence to assume that Methodism constitutes a part of the true Church of Christ. Our last national census makes the following exhibit of the relative numerical strength of the several evangelical denominations in these United States of America:

Episcopalians.....	459,642
Congregationalists.....	475,608
Lutherans.....	1,056,000
Baptists.....	3,974,589
Methodists.....	4,747,130
Colored Methodists.....	800,000

You see that the Methodist is the largest of all the so-called evangelical denominations in this nation. All these denominations have my good will and good wishes. When I was a younger man than I am now I had a notion that the Methodist would absorb all the others, and be *the* Church indeed. I have learned some things since those ear-

lier days. Methodism is a good tree which has borne good fruit in the past. But it cannot live on a pedigree any more than other organizations or families. Near Newport, Rhode Island, a few days ago I saw a grand-looking apple orchard: the trees were very large, with huge trunks and wide-spreading branches extending over many acres of fertile soil. But in the entire orchard there was not the sign of an apple. It was a dead orchard. The trees were past the bearing age, their vitality exhausted. They are now fit only for fuel, and will make good firewood for the coming winter. Down in Florida last winter there was a freeze that killed all the orange orchards, so that there will be plenty of fuel but a scarcity of oranges in that region for some time to come. The frosts of worldliness chill and stunt and kill the spiritual life of the Church. The orchard that is not renewed by fresh plantings must perish. The Christian home and the Sunday school and the Epworth League must replenish the membership of the militant Church whose members are transplanted to the city of God.

We must see to it that Methodism does not become a dead Church—a dead tree that must be hewn down and cast into the fire. The axes are at this moment busy in cutting down some of these trees, the axes of historical judgment, the axes of the judgments of God for perversion of truth and abuse of opportunity. God save Methodism from such a fate! The fires are already kindled that shall consume every dead ecclesiasticism that cumber the ground.

Again: A girdled tree does not die instantly, but it will never bear a second crop afterwards. Mr Balfour, in his recent work on “The Foundations of Belief,” suggests to all concerned that if

the supernatural element be taken out of Christianity, though it will not perish instantly, it will have parted with that which has given it its power and true glory in the past. No future generation of heroes and saints need be expected from a rationalistic Christianity, so called. There is no middle ground between an earnest and aggressive evangelicalism on the one side and a genteel and icy agnosticism on the other. A Christianity that denies the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ is a sort of Christmas tree, on whose branches hang confectionery and painted toys, and real fruit that grew elsewhere. Such a tree is rootless and sapless. But the trees of the Lord are full of sap. They have roots. They are watered from that river of God, which is always full to overflowing. They are rooted in the enduring principles of the divine government. They are watered by the stream that makes glad the city of God, the love of God revealed in the gospel of his Son. Methodism has been such a tree. By its fruits it may be judged.

But the Methodism of the past may be one thing and the Methodism of the future another. In Newport a few days ago a weak-faced, flabby little man was pointed out to me as the son of a great financier, whose millions he inherited and whose name he bears. What this degenerate son of his father will bequeath to his children would not be difficult to predict. The poor little manikin, saturated with strong drink and glorying in the profanity and slang of the race track and poker club, furnishes proof that a pedigree is not a substitute for genuine manhood. In the ecclesiastical sphere it might not be difficult to find the analogue.

Not what was done by our fathers, but what we ourselves of this generation of Methodists shall do, must furnish the demonstration to our contempo-

aries that Methodism is a good tree, bearing good fruit. Our Methodist forefathers were great and good, but not infallible. They bequeathed to us in America a divided Methodism. Most of them have met in heaven, and some of them probably found it difficult to recover from their astonishment that they ever allowed themselves to say and do some things they said and did while here in the flesh. They have met and clasped hands in the city of God. They lived in troublous times; they had fightings without and fears within. We are not ashamed of these glorified fathers of American Methodism. They are wiser now than when they were down here in the midst of the smoke and dust and noise of the battle. If they could speak to us from their seats in glory, they would say: "Let the dead past bury its dead. Draw closer to Jesus your Lord. Close up the ranks, and go forward. Preach a present, free, full, conscious salvation to all the world, and take a fresh start for the conquest of the world."

Our forefathers bequeathed to us a glorious history, together with some troubles and complications. Let us bequeath to our children peace that shall last as long as the sun and the moon endure. The white flag of love is floating over all our ranks—North, South, East, and West. My branch of Methodism has initiated a coöperative movement for the Federation of all willing Methodists. There is music in the word, and I spell it with the big F, as I would the alliterative kindred words—Fraternity, Fellowship, Forgiveness. Let Anno Domini 1900 see a Methodism so united that not a man shall be misplaced nor a dollar wasted in all the fields occupied by Methodists in all the world. This is my wish and prayer; and it is yours, my brethren in Boston. And why do we want this

consummation? • O Searcher of hearts, thou knowest! Not for denominational aggrandizement, not for prestige in the eyes of men, not for numbers for numbers' sake, not for power for power's sake, but for the salvation of earth's millions and to hasten the coronation of its King!

“JESUS, THE LIFE.”

TEXT: "I am . . . the life." (John xiv, 6.)

JESUS, THE LIFE.

THE text is a part of that precious valedictory discourse of our Lord just before his crucifixion, recorded in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of John's Gospel. He had announced to his disciples his approaching departure, and, seeing their sorrow at the separation so soon to take place, he addresses them in language the most tender and consolatory, giving them gracious assurances and precious promises which have been the solace and support of sorrowing hearts through all the ages, and will be while the Bible remains and there are hearts to suffer on earth.

In answer to Simon Peter's question, "Lord, whither goest thou?" Jesus said: "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." With characteristic impetuosity, Peter exclaimed: "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." Then, addressing the bewildered and troubled disciples, Jesus said: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." Then spoke Thomas in his characteristic way: "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" The answer to Thomas's inquiry not only meets the question propounded, but is one of those examples

where in a single verse or sentence the whole gospel is epitomized:—"I am the way, the truth, and the life"—flashing upon the minds of the yet benighted and worldly-minded disciples, in a few short words, those great truths which they were afterwards to preach to the world and witness to with their lives. For in these words is embraced all that was typified under the law, all that was taught by Jesus, all that was purchased by his death, and all that he promises hereafter. Leaving him out of view as the Way and the Truth, it is proposed here to consider him only as the Life.

I. Jesus is the life of the physical universe. I do not wish to strain the text, or stretch it beyond its legitimate application, but there is the highest authority for this declaration that Jesus is the life of the material universe. In the third verse of the first chapter of this (John's) Gospel it is said: "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." And in the tenth verse of that chapter it is said: "The world was made by him." In the eighth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians the same affirmation is made. Also in the second verse of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews it is said again. In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, sixteenth and seventeenth verses, it is said: "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." In the Epistle to the Hebrews, first chapter, second verse, it is said: "By him God made the worlds." In the foregoing passage quoted from the Epistle to the Colossians it is affirmed that "by him all things consist"—

which means that he is the preserver of the universe that he created. The sum of the meaning of these passages quoted is, that *Jesus is the life-principle of the universe*—the life-principle of all that lives. In this grand and lofty sense we may very properly understand his meaning when he says, “I am the Life.”

II. Jesus is the spiritual life of the world—that is to say, he is the life of every religious exercise of the soul, and of every religious act of the life. “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “As sin reigned unto death, even so may grace reign unto eternal life by Jesus Christ.” These are Scripture testimonies as to the general doctrine that Jesus is the spiritual life of the world. “In him,” says John summarily, “is life, and the life is the light of men.”

Sensibility is a condition of life. The dead see not, feel not, hear not. The sinner is represented in the Scriptures as asleep, and as dead; and is called to awake and rise from the dead, that Christ might give him light. As with the body, so with the soul. Physical pain, though dreaded by all and considered an evil, is really an exhibition of the benevolence of our Creator. It warns us of danger to our bodies, and prompts us to seek the means to remove it. If poisonous influences are at work in our body, or if any obstruction hinders the proper performance of its functions, the pain and discomfort apprise us of the fact; and it is only when the ruin is complete, and the body dead, or dying beyond remedy, that there is no longer any pain. So with the soul; so long as it

is within reach of the agencies of the gospel, it cannot be happy in sin. God by an immutable and beneficent law has forbidden that it should be. The keen pangs of conviction, then, are not merely the smart of the avenging rod, but are the evidences that God is mercifully awaking the dead soul to life. There is mercy in conviction, as there is mercy in pardon. The analogy holds still further. The diseased body may be narcotized, and rendered temporarily insensible; but if the cause be not removed, when consciousness does return it will be the more painful, sensibility will be more excruciatingly acute. So the sinful soul may be lulled into forgetfulness of its condition; the opiates of pleasure or the enchantments of the world may quiet the stings of remorse, silence the warning voice of conscience for a season, but not forever: there will be an awakening—it may be amid the perturbations and gloom, the pains and strife of the dying hour, or it may be, alas! amid the deeper horrors of perdition. How important that religious convictions be cherished, that the conscience be kept tender and faithful! Unutterably sad is the condition of the soul which is sinful, and yet feels not the pain of sin. Dreadful indeed is the folly of him who stifles his convictions, and extinguishes the life of his soul. Do you feel the pain of guilt? Seek no balm for that pain but in Jesus, who is thy life. Has the penitential tear begun to flow? Let it flow on—

Let it flow on, till all thine earthly heart
In penitential drops have ebbed away;
Then fearless turn to where He hath set thy part,
Nor shudder at the eye that saw thee stray.

You think that you are wiser and stronger now than you were many years ago—when your conscience was tender, when your soul thrilled

and melted at the scenes of Calvary, and glowed with aspirations for a purer and nobler life. It is not that you are stronger, but that your heart is harder, your soul deadened in sensibilities, your religious susceptibilities abused and almost extirpated. Young people, heed the voice of conscience. Cherish the impressions of the Spirit of God. Ye older ones, go to Jesus, and seek the restoration of your spiritual life and sensibility. You need not pray for your youth to come back, for it will return no more. You need not pray for wasted and misspent time to be recalled. You need not pray that your deeds of evil may be undone, for it cannot be. But you may pray that your blunted religious sympathies may be requickened, that your heart of stone may be taken away, and a heart of flesh given you instead. "In Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, through the riches of his grace." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

Jesus is the life of our religious peace. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This peace is the sweet sense of security from condemnation—a heavenly tranquillity of the soul—the subjection of all our passions and appetites and desires to the obedience of Christ. He is the life of our peace. It is the witness of his Spirit, the sense of his presence, the assurance of his love, the faithfulness of his promises—this is the foundation of the Christian's peace. Jesus is the life of all our peace. In the emphatic language of an apostle, "He is our peace."

Jesus is the life of all religious joy. Religious

joy is the highest development of peace. The sources of our religious joy all center in Jesus. Through him the streams of a divine life pour into the soul of the believer, filling it with God and glory, giving a persuasion of the all-sufficiency of Jesus as the Sacrifice for sin; giving communion with God through him, to *know* the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, the anticipation of his second coming, and the rest that remains for his followers—these are the sources of the Christian's joy, and all center in Jesus, who is our life.

Jesus is the life of our *comforts* and *consolations*. The sorrowing Christian heart turns to the suffering Saviour for solace, and turns not in vain. Anguish that no earthly balm can soothe finds in Gethsemane and Calvary a divine sympathy and fellowship, and in its deepest sorrows the soul throws itself on the bosom of the Man of Sorrows. The weeping, tempted, suffering, dying Jesus is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and the suffering soul finds its best and truest consolation in communion with him.

He is the life of the believer's *hopes*. Every hope that brightens the pathway we tread through life, and throws its radiance beyond the darkness of the grave, centers in Jesus. Do we hope for grace to sustain us? That grace must come through Jesus. Do we hope for comfort in sorrow? We must receive that comfort through Jesus. Do we hope for support in death? That support must come through Jesus.

Jesus is the life of all religious activity. "The love of Christ constraineth us," says the apostle. An indwelling Christ is the inspiration of all healthy religious activity. This love is the essential element of all religion, devotional and practical. It is the motive to obedience. "We love him be-

cause he first loved us"—and from this love springs every act of obedience. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." If we love him, we *will* keep his commandments; we will *delight* in his service. We will find that his commands are not grievous; we will realize that "his yoke is easy, and his burden light." The service of Christ is not onerous task-work, but a labor of love. Love's labors are always easy. Jacob's fourteen years of service for Rachel seemed but a few days for the love that he had to her. The mother never wearies in her ministries to her child. So the love of Christ invigorates and sustains the believer in the discharge of duty. Animated by this love, he is ever ready to deny himself and take up his cross, and follow his Lord. Jesus is the life of all true religious activity. May all his followers enter into the enjoyment of the fullness of that life! A Christian activity flowing out of this principle will be healthful and abiding. Based upon any other foundation, it will be transient in duration, and barren of all good fruits. The love of Christ in the heart is as a fire within that rouses all the activities of the spiritual nature, and impels a man forward in the way of holy endeavor. Vain are the expostulations and entreaties of the pulpit to a Church destitute of this the vital element of Christian experience, this real source of religious activity—the love of Jesus. This is the only life of the soul. Without this life there is no vitality, and consequently no motion. The great need of these times, then, is to have the love of Christ rekindled in the hearts of his followers. Filled with this love, and overflowing, the Christian heart seeks the expression of its affection in all possible endeavors to promote his cause. Love is the strongest principle that moves a human soul to action. With this principle

of love to Christ enthroned in the heart, men are capable of overcoming any difficulties, of enduring any privations, afflictions, and agonies. Sustained by this love, the believer goes down into the valley of the shadow of death fearing no evil, feeling that "neither life nor death," "nor any other creature, shall be able to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." In the language of the inimitable allegorist, he can say as he goes down into the river of death: "This river has been a terror to many; yea, the thoughts of it also have often frightened me; but now methinks I stand easy. My foot is fixed upon that upon which the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood while Israel went over Jordan. The waters are indeed to the palate bitter, and to the stomach cold; yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the convoy that waits for me on the other side, do lie as a glowing coal at my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey: my toilsome days are ended. I am going to see that head which was crowned with thorns, and that face which was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith; but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with Him in whose company I delight myself. I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of his shoes in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too. His name has been to me as a civet-box; yea, sweeter to me than all perfumes. His voice has to me been most sweet, and his countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun. His words I did use to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings. He hath held me and kept me from mine iniquities; yea, my steps hath he strengthened in his way." Yes,

the love of Jesus is the strongest principle of human action that can move the human heart. This love is the life, the essential element, of every true religious desire, emotion, purpose, and act.

III. Jesus is not only the life of our graces, our peace, our joys and hopes on earth, but will be the life of our glorified bodies and redeemed spirits forever.

Immortality was a dream, at most a dim hope, to the heathen. No effort of human intellect could penetrate the veil which hides the future state. Beyond the darkness of the tomb there shone no ray of light. From its gloomy chamber came no voice of assurance or certainty that man should live again. Of the countless millions who have lived and died on earth, not one had come back with a message from beyond the grave. Immortality was at best but a guess—"a leap in the dark." With the most of the ancients, death and annihilation were the same thing.

When Jesus said, "*I am the Life*," he spoke the word which listening humanity had been listening to hear for a hundred generations. He "brought life and immortality" to light through his gospel, in which we find the first distinct revelation of a future state. He lighted up the darkness of the grave, and beyond showed us the city of God. He not only made known the fact of a future life as certain of realization as it is blessed in its character, but he demonstrated its verity and led the way to it by his own resurrection from the dead. Such is the indissolubility of the union between Christ and his disciples, that his resurrection is the type and infallible pledge of theirs. He is the head, they are the members. He is the vine, they are the branches. As he rose, they shall rise. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "They who

receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by Jesus Christ.” “This,” says John, in his first epistle, “is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” Eternal life here means eternal existence and eternal happiness. This happiness will be completed by the resurrection of the human body and its reunion with the soul at the general judgment. Philosophical difficulties are urged against this doctrine of the resurrection of the body, but they are of no weight to the well-instructed mind of a true believer. Resurrection is certainly not a greater miracle than creation. It is no more beyond the power of God to perform the one than the other. “All things are possible with God.” He hath promised the resurrection of the body, and he will perform it.

To some it may appear to be a low and materialistic view of our heavenly state, but I confess there is unspeakable comfort to me in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Jesus took upon him our whole nature, and redeemed our whole nature. He has saved our souls from condemnation and perdition, and rescued our bodies from the dishonors of the grave. We love our bodies. We love the bodies of our kindred and friends: it is the body that establishes their identity with us; through the body we hold converse with them, and with the body is associated every sacred and tender remembrance of them when they are gone. Science may tell us that these bodies are only so much earth, which will soon mingle again with its kindred dust, and be reproduced in other forms. We may be told that they are but the caskets that held for a season the jewels of our souls. We know it to be true; but what a mockery of true love is in the thought that when the coffin-lid is closed

above the faces and forms we love there is no hope that we shall ever see them again. But how unspeakably precious then is the fact of the death and burial of the human body of Jesus, its resurrection and ascension into heaven. We need not dread to commit our bodies to the keeping of the tomb since he has lain there. "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." He will change our vile body and make it like unto his own glorious body—free from infirmity, free from suffering, free from decay.

If this be death, why fear to die? Why fear to go from darkness to light, from toil to rest, from pain to joy?